GUARDIAN WEEKLY
June 23 1996

**Motor Racing** Canadian Grand Prix

# Hill triumphs as Ferrari fumble

**Alan Henry in Montreal**

DAMON HILL scored a runaway victory in the Canadian Grand Prix here to reverse the disappointments of the past two races and strengthen his position at the head of the world championship table as the season reaches its halfway point.

It was the 18th grand-prix victory of his career and another crushing display of superiority by the Williams-Renault team, for whom Jacques Villeneuve completed a one-two finish in front of his home crowd and on the circuit named in honour of his father Gilles.

"I'm absolutely delighted," said Hill. "I was starting to worry about two non-scores. No matter what anyone says, these things do get to you."

Jean Alesi's Benetton-Renault finished third, ahead of the McLaren-Mercedes of David Coulthard and Mika Hakkinen, while Martin Brundle celebrated his 150th grand-prix start with a steady sixth place in his Jordan-Peugeot.

Hill now has 53 points to Villeneuve's 32 and the further boost that Michael Schumacher failed to add to his score of 26 after a desperate afternoon that began badly and got worse.

"Jacques and I knew each other's strategies before the start," said Hill, who opted for a two-stop race to Villeneuve's one, a decision that proved absolutely justified. "We both knew it was vital to lead at the beginning. The car was perfect all the way."

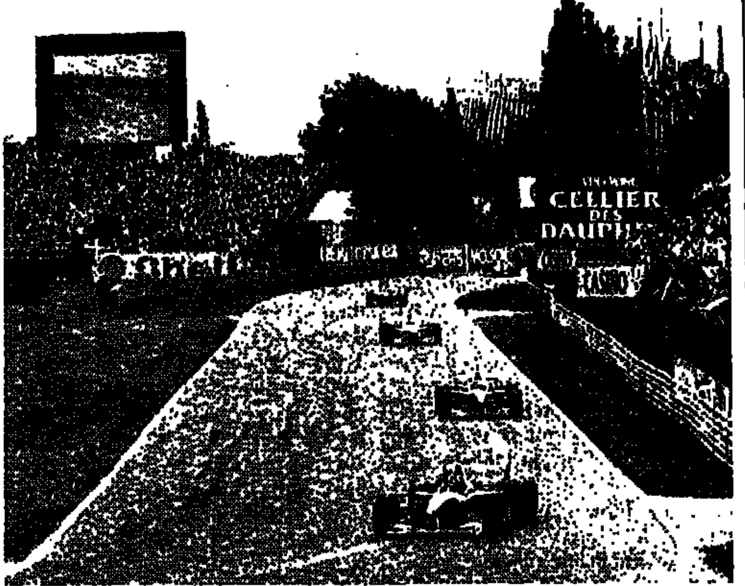
The same could not be said by Schumacher. Electrical problems stranded the reigning world champion's Ferrari on the parade lap. The Italian team's mechanics fell on the scarlet machine in a frenzy but by the time the V10 engine burst into life Hill was halfway round the lap and Schumacher, though third on the starting grid, had to start at the back of the 20-car pack.

On lap 43, and in seventh place, he made the only pit stop his team had envisaged but had to retire seconds later when a drive-shaft broke and flew off the car as he was accelerating out of the pit lane.

Hill, who had been fastest in the crucial half-hour warm-up on race morning, started with a lighter fuel load than Villeneuve, intent on taking full advantage of a clear track in the opening stages. He pulled away steadily and Villeneuve tucked into second place ahead of Alesi and Eddie Irvine's Ferrari.

Midway round the second lap the Ulsterman slowed after feeling the Ferrari's handling suddenly deteriorate. After allowing the rest of the field to overtake he drove gingerly round to the pits, where the car was retired with damaged suspension.

Hill made his first refuelling stop on lap 28, allowing Villeneuve through for a temporary lead, an achievement which moved the local crowds to a degree of fervour which proved as fleeting as their man's advantage.



Follow the leader . . . Damon Hill in front before recording his victory in the Canadian Grand Prix PHOTOGRAPH: PASCAL RONDEAU

Villeneuve came in for his first stop on lap 36 and Hill surged back into the lead, quickly stabilising a commanding lead over Villeneuve. Alesi meanwhile was gradually coming under pressure from his teammate Berger.

Schumacher's strategy to make a single refuelling stop might have worked in his favour had he been up with the leaders, but now it left him with a fuel-heavy Ferrari boxed in among the slower cars.

By the time the race reached the 23-lap mark — one-third distance — he was still trailing round in 11th place, struggling to challenge Johnny Herbert's Sauber and Mika Salo's Tyrrell immediately ahead.

By lap 43 Schumacher had climbed to seventh place when he came in for his single refuelling stop. The car was stationary for 12.4 seconds but, as he accelerated down the pit lane, rival teams were stunned to see a drive-shaft fly off the car.

With only one rear wheel now driving, Schumacher knew his cause was doomed and he crawled back to the pit lane and retired. It ended a dismal day for Ferrari after hopes were raised by their victory in Barcelona.

With the next three races taking place on three of the fastest circuits on the F1 schedule — Magny-Cours, Silverstone and Hockenheim — Hill will be out to press home his advantage as Ferrari steel themselves to recover from this unexpected setback.

Le Mans

## Joest grab easy victory

PORSCHE scored a one-two-three in the Le Mans 24-hour race which finished on Sunday, but to the German makers' chagrin their two works cars were edged out of first place by an independent prototype.

The race was won in style by a Porsche-powered Joest, based on a 1991 Jaguar XJ 14 with the roof removed. It was steered to victory by a virtual league of nations: Germany's Manuel Reuter, Austria's Alexander Wurtz and America's Davey Jones, who was in the driving seat for the final stint.

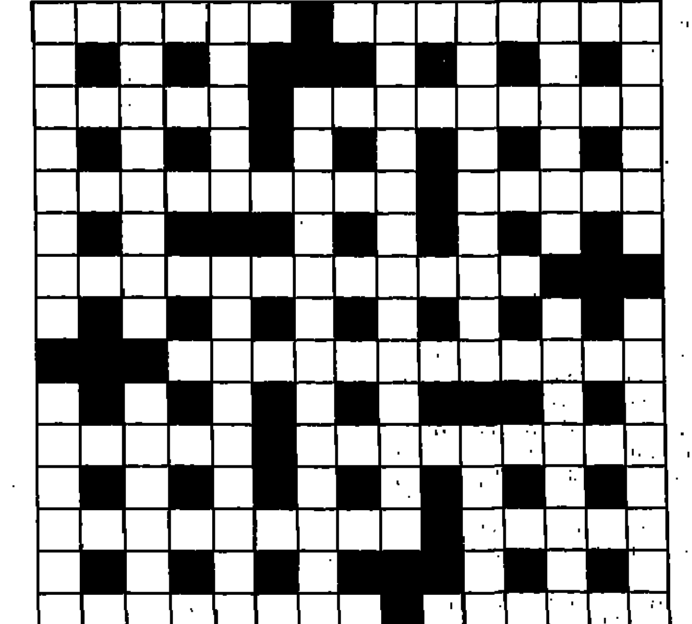
It was a third triumph for the German team Joest, following wins in 1984 and 1985.

"For a private team to win Le Mans two times was very lucky," the team owner Reinhold Joest said. "But winning it a third time proves we must be doing it right."

Porsche's new 911 GT1s took second and third. Germany's Hans Stuck, Belgium's Thierry Boutsen and France's Bob Wollek had taken the lead several times during the night but only because Joest were making pit stops. They eventually had to settle for the runners-up spot.

Joest had taken the lead soon after the start on Saturday and made the most of a trouble-free race in warm, dry conditions. They covered 354 circuits of the eight-mile track at an average speed of 120mph.

## Cryptic crossword by Araucaria



*Method: Solve the clues and fit the solutions into the diagram jigsaw-wise, wherever they will go*

A fever's damage to spleen: a guest soap no way to be seen (4-4)
B full account (start with end) of child with a sinister bend (2-4)
C are diminutive blokes or wreaths worn by classical folks (8)
D for Tim's turn Paul's advice from French about triumph on ice (5,4)
E is for Duke and for duke, the one that his leader forsook (9)
F home from far fields with hunt (9,4) I make notes on a cheat at the front (6-3)
G for this novel this script? Become thick when the monarch has skipped (6)
H for a plant grown inside, a standard the firm waves with pride (5-4)
I is a lobe in the brain, a second in elecampane (6)
J the month's brief, I give thanks, for rulers of military ranks (5)
K is a character Greek, a checker of rates, so to speak (5)
L takes up minimum space: an article's entered in case (5)
M ends in cross to keep quiet (6) the dead get their way in a diet (8)
N for the East time for dinner: who isn't (asks vicar) a sinner? (2-3)
O is a cat of the snow: tell the world that the girl has to go (5)
P for two more such as K: Madonna and child on last day (5)
Q my health is all right; if somewhere in Surrey, take flight (5,4)
R I am making whoopee; not straightforward to terrorise me (9)
S goes to pubs taking Ryle in simply magnificent style (8)
T pen in one tyrant that's free with calm as of satellite's sea (12)
U is the next thing to hide — thing cruel don transmogrified (13)
V to give cut to the quick's for religious brigade double six (8)
W unyielding in fight, respected, if not in despite (12)
X with ten articles laden, the name (for a blonde?) of a maiden (6)
Y when it climbs study road, which boredom or sleepiness showed (6)
Z from this isle to ascend ran a business enclosed at the end (8)

**Last week's solution**

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| | C | H | A | R | L | E | S | R | E | A | D | E | | |

**Rugby Union** New Zealand 62 Scotland 31

## All black for men in blue

RICHIE DIXON, the Scotland coach, called for an overhaul of club rugby north of the border in the wake of last weekend's record defeat in the first Test in Dunedin, a game that illustrated the widening gulf between the two hemispheres.

A week after Wales were heavily beaten in the first Test against Australia, Scotland conceded nine tries on Saturday. Dixon said: "No club can go it alone. What is needed is for districts to have separate sponsors and to channel talent through them."

Dixon praised Scotland, even though the tourists conceded 11 points more than in their previous worst Test defeat, also against the All Blacks, at Murrayfield in 1993.

But he admitted: "We still have problems in the front three against a huge New Zealand front row." He also conceded that the back three was a problem area.

Christian Cullen was Scotland's nemesis as the full-back, playing only his second match for the All Blacks, scored four tries in a brilliant display. Scotland's captain Rob Wainwright conceded afterwards: "This was the fastest Test that I have ever played in. I hope that this style gets back to Europe."

Meanwhile winger Derek Stark, centre Tony Stanger and prop Barry Stewart pressed their claims for a place in the second Test in Auckland after they helped Scotland squeak home 35-31 against the Bay of Plenty in Rotorua, where falling ash from the erupting Mt Ruapehu forced an early end to the previous day's training session.

Stark was playing his first game since straining a hamstring in the match against Waikato while, on the other wing, Scotland gave the tour replacement Cameron Glasgow his first game.

The All Blacks have recalled the centre Walter Little for the second Test. He replaces Waikato's Scott McLeod in New Zealand's only change. Little was ruled out of the first Test by a hamstring strain.

Wales arrived in Melbourne on Sunday adamant that the Neath No. 8 Steve Williams, one of the successes of their tour, will be fit for the second Test against the Wallabies on Saturday. Williams was forced off with rib damage during the 49-3 victory over New South Wales Country in the Outback town of Moree on Saturday.

"It is just bruising. Steve will be OK by Saturday," said the tour manager Terry Cobner. "Hemi Taylor has a cut mouth but didn't need any stitches and will also be fine for the [coming Test]."

The tourists, beaten 56-25 in the first Test, took to the spa waters for a "recovery" session before leaving Moree. "The spa waters speed up the recovery process for knocks and bruises so we were grateful for the chance for a session in the pools," said Cobner.

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The Washington Post Le Monde

# Lilley evades court ruling on refugees

**Alan Travis**

THE British government is to overturn a Court of Appeal judgment on withdrawing welfare benefits from most asylum seekers by rushing emergency asylum legislation through Parliament.

The court, in one of the most devastating rulings delivered by judges against ministers, last week declared illegal a policy which has deprived more than 8,000 asylum seekers of welfare benefits since February.

The social security secretary, Peter Lilley, insisted the proposed measures were essential if Britain were to remain a safe haven for genuine refugees and not a "soft touch" for false claimants. "We are determined that this judgment will not provide a blank cheque for bogus asylum seekers," he said.

But his Commons statement on Monday caused an outcry. Labour said the plan to rush through a series of amendments to the Asylum and Immigration Bill was an "abuse of process", while immigrants' rights groups called it a "moral outrage".

The decision to introduce emergency legislation means that ministers decided it was unlikely they would win an appeal if they took their case to the House of Lords.

The new legislation will be incorporated into the bill at the last possible moment, with new clauses being tabled on July 1 at its third reading stage in the Lords.

Mr Lilley said the new legislation would write into statute the power to exclude benefits from asylum seekers who failed to claim refugee status when they first arrived, or whose claim had been rejected but who were appealing. His one small concession was to say that those whose asylum claims were eventually granted in full would receive a welfare benefit payment backdated to the day they lodged a claim for refugee status.

Claud Moraes, director of the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, which brought the Appeal Court case on behalf of Miss B, an asylum seeker fleeing from Zaire, said the Government's action was a moral outrage. "To come back with emergency legislation simply because they don't want to face the higher court shows the moral depths to which this Government has sunk in attempting to keep the 'race card' element of the Asylum Bill intact."

The director of the Refugee Council, Nick Hardwick, was disturbed about the details of the package: "The new proposals won't work because it takes an average of 18 months to have asylum claims finally determined. How is a person supposed to survive in the meantime?"

In their ruling last week, the senior judges described Mr Lilley's policy of withdrawing welfare benefits as "uncompromisingly draconian". The withdrawal of benefits meant that in practice it was "not merely difficult but totally impossible for them to remain here to pursue their asylum claims", said Lord Justice Waite.

But it was also the strong moral terms of the judgment which were unusual. The ruling said asylum seekers were not allowed to work and only a very few would get help from charities. The "vast majority would be left without even the most basic means of subsistence".

More than 8,000 people seeking asylum in Britain have been left without official means of support since their entitlement to claim benefits was withdrawn on February 5.

The Benefits Agency has instructed its office to start accepting new claims from asylum seekers in line with the Appeal Court ruling. They will pay welfare benefits to asylum seekers until the emergency legislation becomes law in mid-July.

● Torture victims who claim refugee status in Britain are to be exempted from the new Asylum and Immigration Bill, the Government announced earlier last week.

The decision, taken after a House of Lords revolt, means that asylum seekers who can show a reasonable likelihood that they have been tortured will not have to go through a new fast-track appeals procedure.

Race relations good, page 8

## Mirror back on warpath

FOURTEEN summers ago, in the midst of the Falklands war, the Sun was fomenting hatred against Argentina. The Daily Mirror called the Sun a "coarse and demented newspaper", and quite right too, *comments Matthew Engel*.

But among the headlines and captions on the first three pages of Monday's Mirror were "Achtung! Surrender", "Mirror declares football war on Germany", "The Mirror Invades Berlin", plus, of course, the stale jokes about sun-loungers.

The tone throughout was that this week's semi-final against Germany in the European Championship was not a re-run of the World Cup final but of the second world war. Maybe it was intended to be funny. Only the humourless could believe that. It was coarse and demented journalism.

The Germans can probably take it. They will assume this is yet another manifestation of the British tragedy. The hooligans may not be so relaxed. English football is not yet so free of the disease that nearly killed it to make this kind of provocation necessarily cost-free. It is obscenely irresponsible journalism.

To those of us who care about newspapers, there is something else. It was the second world war that raised the Daily Mirror to greatness. During hostilities its mixture of lightness of heart and seriousness of purpose made it the embodiment of the ordinary Briton's determination.

If the Mirror is articulating the nation's attitude now, this is a very sick country. I hope and trust, though, that all we have is a sick and desperate newspaper.

Euro 96, pages 31-32

## 'Turbulent priest' bids farewell

AN ERA in South Africa's Anglican church came to an end at the weekend when Archbishop Desmond Tutu (above) formally retired at a moving service in Cape Town's St George's Cathedral, *writes David Beresford*.

Nelson Mandela paid tribute to his fellow Nobel laureate by bestowing on him the highest honour in the land — the newly-created Gold Order for Meritorious Service, awarded for the first time.

Archbishop Tutu's period of office will be remembered not only for his opposition to apartheid, but for his determined stand on principle even when it threatened to bring him into conflict with black South Africa. His election as Archbishop of Cape Town in 1986 threatened to split the Anglican Church in South Africa, many whites threatening to leave rather than accept the authority of the "turbulent priest" and his high-profile support of sanctions.

But his fierce independence has brought him a popularity in all sections of society, rivalling even that of President Mandela. PHOTO: GUY TILLIM

# Arab leaders warn Israel not to backtrack on peace

**David Hirst in Cairo**

ARAB leaders ended their two-day summit this week with a warning to Israel's new rightwing government that they will "reconsider" concessions made in the name of the peace process if Israel backtracks on land-for-peace, the principle on which the process has been based.

They said there must be full Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights, and that the Palestinians must be permitted to set up an independent state with Jerusalem as its capital.

That the first summit in six years took place at all and then passed off without serious disputes was a considerable success for the Egyptian president, Hosni Mubarak, and his efforts to restore a modicum of Arab solidarity.

Apart from Libya's Colonel Muammar Gadafy, who accused everyone of letting everyone else down, the most discordant note was struck, as expected, by King Hussein of Jordan. "We deny any state the right to protect the forces of evil and terrorism that seek to achieve their aims under the guise of religion or ideology," he told the conference. "Cross-border terrorism must be fought through condemnation, pursuit or liquidation, wherever its dens may be."

While doubtless intended as music to the ears of Israel and the United States, his words were also an implicit attack on Syria's President Hafez al-Assad, his alleged dispatch of "saboteurs" into Jordan and his support for Hizbullah in south Lebanon.

In his opening address, Mr Mubarak set the tone of the summit, saying: "We are not warmongers and we reject violence."

But in an implicit denunciation of the hardline programme of the new Israeli prime minister, Binyamin Netanyahu, and such preconditions as his refusal to withdraw from the Golan, he said: "If any party allows itself to choose what to negotiate and what not, then other parties have the same right, which brings the peace process to zero, or totally destroys it."

*Reuter adds*: Mr Netanyahu criticised the Arab summit on Monday, saying success in the peace process required an end to "one-sided demands".

In response to the summit's vow to reconsider concessions if Israel tries to change the terms of negotiations, he said: "One-sided demands which harm security do not go together with talks for peace. For the process to continue successfully and fruitfully, such statements must be stopped."





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| Austria | AS30 | Malta | 45c |
| Belgium | BF75 | Netherlands | G 4.75 |
| Denmark | DK16 | Norway | NK 16 |
| Finland | FM 10 | Portugal | E300 |
| France | FF 13 | Saudi Arabia | SR 6.60 |
| Germany | DM 4 | Spain | P 300 |
| Greece | DR 400 | Sweden | SK 19 |
| Italy | L 3,000 | Switzerland | SF 3.30 |

# Birt's management of a world disservice

JOHN TUSA, my last boss as a senior producer and reporter in the World Service Science Unit, exposed the idiocy of present BBC management (Birt unleashes a mission to destroy, June 23). What he didn't do, however, was make clear the financial and editorial tomfoolery of it.

The reasons why the World Service in English makes its own programmes are two-fold. First comes suitability for the audience. In many fields there is a need to remember how different this little island is compared with the rest of the world. A single bite by a rabid animal makes national news for days here: abroad it is nothing. I have heard Radio 4 refer to the military dictatorship in Burma as the "government" and the democratically elected, but suppressed, government as the "opposition". Do that on WS and your audience is gone.

In addition, programme costs in Bush House are a small fraction of those for domestic radio. For instance, WS's flagship science programme Science In Action had a weekly budget for contributors and travel costs of about £300 when I retired. The comparable figure for Radio 4's Science Now was probably at least twice as much.

Furthermore, the source material for WS programmes also served, at minimal conversion cost, for adaptation in the foreign-language services, just as centralised reporting and script for them doubled as source for WS in English. I cannot see WS being able to meet production costs more aligned to domestic radio. Why not just switch off World Service now?
*Dick Oliver,*
*Colchester, Essex*

IT IS often said that the BBC World Service is the only institution in this country of which we can today be proud. Perhaps this is because it has different roots from the domestic service.

In its early days as the European Service during the second world war, new sub-editors were told over and over never to forget that their job was "to give bad news honestly and good news soberly". This was a hard principle to follow when all the news was bad, but when the news was finally of victories, we were believed.

Something of that belief is still around and what the World Service broadcasts today is still widely held to be the "truth"; but what may not be so widely known is the apparent conviction of many in this country that it is to be preferred to the BBC's domestic news service. Why then, for heaven's sake, is it now proposed to place World Service news and current affairs under the direction of the BBC's domestic service? They are two different animals. If the World Service loses its separate identity, it will wither away.
*Monica Wilson,*
*London*

I SHARE John Tusa's concern with the latest Birtian shake-up of the World Service. The news and analysis provided on Newshour is far superior to the dreary, domestic preoccupations of Radio 4's Today. For those of us who want to know what is happening in Spain or Sri Lanka, and don't care whether Tony Blair smacks his kids, I say to John Birt, leave Newshour alone.
*(Dr) Alan Bullion,*
*Tunbridge Wells, Kent*

IN BURMA they say there are four disasters — fire, flood, earthquake and government. The BBC's four disasters are Birt, Birt, Birt and Birt. He is a great man. Few have his vision or determination. But the fact is that BBC staff are fed up to the back teeth with his tortured thinking and Stalinist regimentation. Give someone else a turn.
*Derek Brooke-Wavell,*
*Head, BBC Burmese Service 1984-95,*
*Reading, Berks*



## Guilty over Jerusalem

SHYAM BHATIA'S report (Israel to squeeze Arabs from holy city, June 16) is no surprise to all those who over the years have watched the rights and privileges of the people of Palestine usurped by Israel, settlements extended on the West Bank, the land of Lebanon effectively divided, and witnessed attempts to extend sovereignty over Golan and Jerusalem. All this was done with the knowledge, support and encouragement of the West in general and the United States in particular. Though Israel is guilty, the guilt extends much further than Israel proper — to the West and the United States.

As long as the US continues to support Israel with billions of dollars in aid and military hardware Israel will continue its occupation. It is US aid that has helped create settlements in the occupied lands; it is US-made bombs dropped by US-made planes that have killed innocent civilians — perhaps by Americans with dual nationality. It is the US veto that has protected the aggressors from the wrath of the world community.

Had it not been for the intifada, Yasser Arafat would not have been heard. Binyamin Netanyahu may not realise, the US may not be interested to know, and the Arab nations may be too divided to appreciate that unless a real peace — a just and equitable peace — is achieved soon, Arafat's days will be numbered, bringing the demise of the US's so-called friends.

The next generation would be far more explosive than the Israelis have been accustomed to. The influence of Iran is bound to increase. No matter how hard the US and Israel try, Iran — with its support of Hizbullah and Hamas — will win the hearts and minds of the Arabs. After all, Iran is doing no more than what the US did for Afghanistan — helping the people to get rid of an occupation force.
*Akram Malik,*
*Gympie, Queensland, Australia*

I WAS sickened to read of the intentions of Shmuel Meir to rid Jerusalem of Arabs. According to the article, he believes that Arabs have "no rights in the holy city".
*Christine Ford,*
*Worthing, Sussex*

## The wrong kind of bias

JAMES GLASSMAN subscribes to the paranoid-right complaint that the US press and media have "a liberal bias" (Obvious Bias in the Press, May 19). A great majority of media journalists, according to the reports he cites, vote Democrat.

What Mr Glassman does not reveal, however, is how those who *own* the media vote. The way to discover the party bias of a corporate conglomerate is to find out which party those who run it vote for and contribute to, not which one its employees prefer.

Even if voting Democrat does not in fact mean you're a "liberal" (are southern Democrats liberal?), voting and financing Republican almost certainly means you're anti-liberal. And which party do you think the media barons finance and vote for? If you're looking for bias in the media, go to the top where those who hobnob with corporate advertisers, hire and fire editors, and set corporate policy are. Going to the journalists is, alas, going to the hired hands.

Press oligopolist Conrad Black has, through his chief of staff, characterised the relationship between media owner and media employee in this way: "If editors disagree with us, they should disagree with us when they're no longer in our employ. The buck stops with the ownership. I am responsible for meeting the payroll. Therefore, I will ultimately determine what the papers say, and how they are going to be run."
*(Prof) John McMurtry,*
*University of Guelph,*
*Guelph, Ontario, Canada*

## Breast milk is best milk

IT IS typical of the approach all too many health professionals take that Dr John Chisholm would not be able to tell mothers which milk is safe for their babies, even without knowing the brand names of those that contain excess amounts of phthalates (Milk fears create new food crisis, June 2).

It is the same milk that has less lead, manganese, aluminium and cadmium, all potentially toxic, than all brands of baby milk. It is the same milk that has many factors that protect babies against infection, encourage optimal development of the brain, eyes, etc — the page will not suffice to include all that is in this milk and not present in the others. It is the same milk that has proved safe over hundreds of thousands of years and has, up to the present at any rate, assured the survival of the human race. And yet, in not one story I have read or heard on this phthalate issue has that milk ever been mentioned.

It is breast milk, mother's milk, human milk. And it's free, and almost all mothers produce more than enough for their babies so that they would never have to use artificial milk. But I suppose that a health professional would not want to make mothers feel guilty for not breastfeeding if he/she told them that breastfeeding was the best, and that perhaps it is best to be careful using substitutes made in a factory by machines and people who are not infallible.

Of course, artificial baby milk is sometimes necessary and, on rare occasions, can even save babies' lives — just as a drug may occasionally save lives and can be useful therapeutically. But just as in the case of a drug, it is not normal for babies to ingest these quite unphysiologic milks, and they may cause side-effects, occasionally quite serious, both in the short term and long term.
*(Dr) Jack Newman,*
*Breastfeeding Support Programme,*
*Toronto, Ontario, Canada*

## Briefly

IT WOULD be advisable for the authors of articles on women's poverty (as exemplified by Vicki Allen's Women and children bear the brunt of world poverty, June 2) to produce more solid evidence for their comparisons with the poverty of men and of male children. The use of a global quantitative average presented by Allen is misleading because it is not applicable to entire regions, cultures and even continents. The quantitative information supplied contradicts reality in South America: awful deprivation affects large populations irrespective of their sex or gender. There is no better shelter or less polluted water for men then for women.
*Gloria Murmis,*
*Callao, Buenos Aires, Argentina*

DAN GLAISTER'S A classic dilemma (June 9) brings to mind the words of Karajan, who set the tone when he announced after listening to digital technology for the first time: "We must do the whole repertoire again." But seven years after his death, the image of the great interpreter has fizzled out. The salesman was no longer there to keep it up-market. Of course classical music has bottomed out. It's propagated like soap. Far too big … far too inflated. A sad indictment on marketing mania, which cannot differentiate, idolises image and squeezes everything to saturation point.
*David Kehoe,*
*Munich, Germany*

MAY I congratulate Efraim Csuwoj (June 9) on the need for us to be open to explore all subjects of history, however painful. Belief in moral virtue resting on one side only in a complex struggle like the second word war does nothing to guard against false moral judgments in conflicts of today and tomorrow.
*Ronald F Price,*
*La Trobe University,*
*Melbourne, Australia*

AS THE parent of two children attending primary school in Taipei, I was alarmed to see that HM Chief Inspector of Schools, Chris Woodhead, is going head over heels for maths teaching as practised in Taiwan (Woodhead ups pressure on schools, June 9). Mr Woodhead may be unaware that the Taiwanese system relies heavily on parents helping children who fail to grasp the concepts taught in school maths lessons. Alternatively, parents shell out for after-school coaching or cram school classes. Higher standards of performance are also driven by an extremely heavy homework load, plus twice-term examinations from the age of six.
*Judith A Fletcher,*
*Taipei, Taiwan*

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# India holds out on test ban treaty

**Stephanie Nebehay in Geneva**

**THE HEAD of global negotiations for a nuclear test ban treaty presented a new text on Monday but encountered objections from India that could torpedo the pact.**

**Jaap Ramaker, the Dutch ambassador, said he hoped the draft would form the basis of an accord by an agreed deadline on Friday. But he conceded that his amended text did not meet India's demands for a clear commitment to total nuclear disarmament within a fixed period of 10 years.**

**India protested against a clause in the proposed global treaty that would require New Delhi to sign the pact for it to take effect, and offered an alternative approach.**

**"Our permanent representative in Geneva has made it clear we would not accept or allow any language in the treaty that would affect our sovereign decision on whether or not we would sign the treaty," a senior foreign ministry official said.**

**Mr Ramaker, the chairman at the talks, also acknowledged he had failed to persuade some delegations to accept a new clause that would not make the treaty's entry into force dependent on ratification by eight key states including India.**

**India, one of three nuclear "threshold" states, along with Pakistan and Israel, warned last week that it could not sign the treaty "in its present form" — raising a spectre the pact may never enter into force.**

**The 61-member state Conference on Disarmament aims to wrap up by June 28 its two-year negotiations on a comprehensive test ban treaty (CTBT), which would prohibit nuclear explosions.**

**All five declared nuclear powers — Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States — and the three states deemed close to having a nuclear capability are taking part.**

**Mr Ramaker said his revised text had "all the ingredients for a final agreement". He made clear he had no intention of extending the talks. "I am determined to bring the negotiations to a close on June 28. There is no reason to believe any issue still outstanding will be solved merely by time," he said.**

**But the chairman said he had not reached a breakthrough on the essential issue of how many ratifications were needed for the treaty to take effect — expected in several years. "The entry into force formula is of fundamental importance for the fate of this treaty," Mr Ramaker said.**

**The dilemma was to make sure that all relevant states would be on board before a treaty enters into force and, on the other hand, to find a formula such that none of these countries or any other country could ever block entry into force, according to the Dutch diplomat, who held urgent negotiations at the weekend. — *Reuter***

**Washington Post, page 15**



**Hard life . . . Homeless Indians sleep out in a New Delhi square last week. Two out of five people live in absolute poverty in India — home to a sixth of the world's population** PHOTO: KAMAL KISHOR

# Nigeria defiant at talks with Commonwealth

**Ian Black**

NIGERIA began its first talks with the Commonwealth on Monday since its membership was suspended in November, but there was little sign that it could meet the concerns about human rights and democracy.

Its foreign minister, Tom Ikimi, arrived in London after two leading political detainees and three student leaders were freed in his homeland — part of an attempt to assuage mounting international criticism. He told reporters: "Democracy has already been restored."

The Nigerian team met the action group of seven Commonwealth foreign ministers, which was set up at the Auckland summit in November after the execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other Ogoni activists.

The ministers are from Malaysia, Zimbabwe, Jamaica, Ghana, Britain, New Zealand, South Africa and Canada, and they are bitterly divided about what action to take.

Britain wants the Commonwealth to adopt the limited sanctions imposed by the European Union, and will consider the additional measures that were threatened in April if the military regime of General Sani Abacha failed to enter a dialogue. But it seems unwilling to go much further.

British Foreign Office sources said it wanted an "acceleration" of the three-year timetable given by Gen Abacha for the restoration of civilian rule and a "clear set of commitments on human rights".

Concern about the prospects for an improvement was fuelled earlier this month by the murder in Lagos of Kudirat Abiola, wife of Moshood Abiola, the presumed winner of a 1993 presidential election annulled by the military.

Preliminary signs suggest that the Nigerians are not in a conciliatory mood. Lagos's Thisday newspaper reported this week that Chief Ikimi is to demand the restoration of Commonwealth membership, an end to talks about further sanctions, and support for Gen Abacha's transition to democracy programme. Chief Ikimi also wants a platform for regular dialogue with the Commonwealth, the paper said.

The United States, Britain and the EU are reluctant to apply economic, and particularly oil, sanctions against Nigeria, and there is little enthusiasm for a proposal to freeze the assets of members of the regime.

Britain's Department of Trade and Industry strongly opposes sanctions, especially as British companies are the largest investors in, and exporters to, Nigeria.

# Hard men sacked in Kremlin purge

**David Hearst in Moscow**

DELIVERING a master stroke likely to win him key support in the second round of the presidential election, Boris Yeltsin sacked three of the most powerful men in his administration last week, after allegations that they had tried to stage a coup.

General Alexander Korzhakov, head of the presidential bodyguard and a confidant of at least 10 years standing, General Mikhail Barsukov, the head of the federal security service, and Oleg Soskovyets, the first deputy prime minister, were dismissed.

All had become obstacles to Mr Yeltsin's newly appointed security supremo, the former general Alexander Lebed, who joined the presidential team promising a law and order crackdown and reforms in the army. Their sacking makes Mr Lebed, after Mr Yeltsin, the most powerful man in the country, with the muscle to place his men in the vacant posts.

The heads of all three men had been demanded a month ago, in talks between Mr Yeltsin and the liberal economist Grigory Yavlinsky. Mr Yavlinsky came fourth in the first round of the election, getting 5.5 million votes. In a conference at the weekend, Yabloko, Mr Yavlinsky's party, endorsed Mr Yeltsin in next month's election but stuck to its demand that he should take steps to end the war in Chechenia.

With many of the 11 million voters who backed Mr Lebed joining the Yeltsin bandwagon, the scales are tilting against the Communist leader, Gennady Zyuganov, who came within three points of Mr Yeltsin's vote in the first round.

Gen Korzhakov, Gen Barsukov and Mr Soskovyets were sacked after the detention of two Yeltsin aides who were attempting to carry out of the White House, the seat of Russia's government, a box containing $500,000 in cash.

The three were accused by liberals in Mr Yeltsin's team of masterminding the detentions of the two men in an attempt to discredit Mr Yeltsin's campaign and pave the way for a coup. The president denied the allegation. He said he had sacked the three to get fresh faces into his team. He said: "I was never under Korzhakov's thumb. Can't you understand the fact that he lacks it up here? I don't want to be precise what he lacks, but it's the main thing."

After earlier vowing to crush any rebellion in the ranks, Mr Lebed backed away from the conspiracy theory. He said: "This is a rather murky affair, which will take a long time to clear up."

Meanwhile the liberals in the Kremlin, who had been mortal enemies of Gen Korzhakov, were claiming a "victory for democracy". Anatoli Chubais, the former privatisation supremo, claimed that the three men had been preparing a coup.

"They hoped Yeltsin would finish second in the first round and then they would suggest using force. But Yeltsin took first place and then took them by surprise by making Lebed the secretary of the security council. The ground was slipping from under their feet, that is why they acted."

A member of the Lebed camp admitted last week that Mr Yeltsin's campaign team helped his supposed opponent in an attempt to draw votes away from the Communists.

But he denied allegations that a deal was made between Mr Lebed and Mr Yeltsin before the first round of voting which enabled him to take up a Kremlin post so soon after his success became known.

Gennady Tupikin, head of the Lebed campaign headquarters staff in Moscow, said that Mr Yeltsin's aides had weighed up the relative merits of Mr Lebed and Mr Yavlinsky as potential drainers of the Communist vote. "They read the situation right. They carried out their own surveys and found out that Lebed had far more support than Yavlinsky. So they decided to do Lebed more favours than Yavlinsky," Mr Tupikin said.

Since Mr Lebed's remarkable rise to power, after he came third in the first round of voting in the presidential election, it has been clear that the balance of power in the Kremlin will be upset.

Mr Lebed demanded and got the post of secretary of the national security council. He further insisted on having real powers to get on with the job of reforming the army, clamping down on the mafia and making good his promise to restore law and order.

For this task he needs to control not only the key appointments in the army but also the army's budget. In his way stood Mr Soskovyets, the deputy prime minister, who controlled the military purse strings. And behind Mr Soskovyets stood Gen Korzhakov and Gen Barsukov.

The clash of the Titans was thus inevitable. It took four days to unfold, and when it happened Mr Lebed emerged the victor. He has now had a clean sweep. With the sacking last week of the defence minister, General Pavel Grachev, he has the power to appoint his men to all the key security posts.

This is awesome power to be put in the hands of a young, ambitious two-star reservist general.

What happens next is anyone's guess. Will the young general make good on his promises to respect the constitution, serve his president and respect the will of his electors? Or will he become a new tyrant, dispensing favours to his friends and instilling fear in his enemies?

The story of Mr Lebed's rise has little to do with democracy, free elections, or Russia's transition to a market economy. It has everything to do with the Byzantine and dangerous world of Kremlin politics.

Mr Zyuganov called on Monday for a pact between Russia's main political forces, saying the country was on the verge of economic collapse and that only a coalition government could now run it.

To reflect the votes that he and Mr Yeltsin received in the first round of voting, Mr Zyuganov said that one-third of the ministers in his proposed council of national accord should be nominated by him, one-third by Mr Yeltsin and one-third by the other political parties in parliament.

Mr Zyuganov, who has stopped campaigning for the second round runoff between himself and Mr Yeltsin on July 3, said: "Russia is in a serious situation and no single political force is in a dominant position." He then named 14 of his own candidates for a coalition government, and added, significantly, that the Communists had already held talks with 12 serving ministers and 27 vice-ministers.

One reason why Mr Zyuganov appears to be concentrating on rival politicians rather than his electorate is the fear that the power battle which raged last week in the Kremlin is still continuing.

Mr Zyuganov has praised Mr Lebed, but accused the libertarian free-market faction of presidential advisers headed by Mr Chubais of acting as a "fifth column" for Western interests.

**Norman Stone, page 12**
**Washington Post, page 17**

## The Week

**AMERICAN and allied troops in the Gulf war could have been exposed to Iraqi chemical weapons when an ammunition bunker was destroyed in March 1991, after the war had officially ended, the Pentagon confirmed.**
Washington Post, page 16

**THE US said it would use its veto if necessary to block a second five-year term for the United Nations secretary-general, Boutros Boutros-Ghali. The White House insisted the motive was UN reform, rather than pressure from domestic politics.**
Comment, page 12
Washington Post, page 15

**A ROW between Germany and China over human rights in Tibet worsened as Bonn called off a series of planned official contacts. Earlier, Beijing had withdrawn its invitation for a visit by the German foreign minister, Klaus Kinkel.**

**SOUTH AFRICA'S last apartheid-era police commissioner, Johan van der Merwe, has confessed to playing a role in political killings and other crimes.**

**DENMARK and Norway said they were sending envoys to Burma to seek a full explanation of the death in prison of their shared consul, Leo Nichols, a friend of the democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi.**

**THEODORE Kaczynski, a former maths professor, has been charged at Sacramento, California, with four attacks blamed on the "Unabomber", including two that killed men a decade apart.**

**CONSERVATIVES in California are in uproar about a surprise ruling by the state's supreme court overturning the "three strikes and you're out" law.**
Washington Post, page 15

**TONY EDWARD HICKS, who committed a murder at the age of 14 became the youngest person to receive a 25-years-to-life sentence when he was sent to prison in San Diego, California.**

**SCIENTISTS have identified the "quisling" molecule that opens the cell door and welcomes the Aids virus. The discovery raises hopes for a new drug to block the spread of the virus.**

**SHEIKH Hasina, head of the Awami League and daughter of Bangladesh's murdered independence leader, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, was sworn in as prime minister.**

**A FURIOUS row has broken out at the International Whaling Commission's meeting at Aberdeen in Scotland over Norway's bid to hunt its catch quota of minke whales.**

# Indonesia rulers act to split opposition

**John Aglionby and agencies in Jakarta**

INDONESIA'S powerful military said on Monday it no longer recognised Megawati Sukarnoputri as the leader of the opposition Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI). A rebel faction of the PDI deposed Ms Megawati and elected the deputy parliamentary speaker, Mr Surjadi, as party chief at a congress that ended at the weekend in the north Sumatran city of Medan.

Ms Megawati, daughter of Indonesia's late founding president, Sukarno, told more than 3,000 supporters on Sunday that the rebel congress was not legal and she would not leave the party's headquarters.

The interior minister, Yogie Suardi Memet, who opened and closed the meeting, said the congress was legal and that the government backed Mr Surjadi.

"The government has formally recognised the outcome of the Medan congress . . . so it will not recognise any rivals. If the government sticks to its stance, so will the armed forces," Lieutenant-General Syarwan Hamid, chief of the armed forces socio-political affairs, told reporters. He said Mr Surjadi was expected to settle the rivalry within the PDI without the use of force. He gave no other details.

Ms Megawati last week accused the government of suppressing democratic rights and actively promoting a rebellion in the PDI by sponsoring the congress of dissidents. She is facing a rebellion from PDI members dissatisfied with her drive for more democracy, less corruption and more transparent government. They held a three-day congress last week, which Megawati loyalists believe is part of a government-backed conspiracy to oust her in favour of someone regarded as less troublesome and split the PDI before next year's general election and the 1998 presidential election. Last week Ms Megawati sacked 16 dissenting members of the PDI's executive board in an attempt to stem the rebellion.

"As a matter of fact, the congress . . . is an armed military camp. The congress itself is more like a military congress than a political party congress," she said in a statement.

Her statement is unusual in a country which allows only a token and tame opposition. Her comments came a day after baton-swinging troops broke up a rally in Jakarta, where about 5,000 PDI supporters were protesting against the congress. At least 128 people were injured and 70 arrested.

The fighting began when the authorities prevented the marchers from reaching the home affairs ministry. The demonstrators claimed the government was interfering in an internal PDI dispute and some carried portraits of Aung San Suu Kyi, Burma's opposition leader, likening their campaign to her fight for democracy in Burma.

Police formed a line across the street near the central Gambir railway station to block the march, but they were pushed back by stone-throwing demonstrators, witnesses said. Backed by soldiers, they regrouped and charged the marchers, clubbing them with batons and rattan canes and pursuing others down side streets. Onlookers said soldiers hit people indiscriminately, threw stones and bottles, and smashed car windows.

Many people were seen leaving the area with blood streaming down their faces and one person was reported to have been run over by an armoured car and killed.

President Suharto's wife died in April and there has been speculation that the 75-year-old leader will step down at the next election. He has not groomed any obvious successor.

At the last general election, in 1992, the ruling Golkar party's share of the vote dropped from 73 per cent to 68 per cent; the PDI's rose to 15 per cent.

Analysts said the prospect of two rival PDI groups will lead to political instability in Indonesia in the run-up to the 1997 general elections, which are seen as a scene-setter for presidential polls the following year.



City battle . . . Police and troops charge opposition demonstrators in Jakarta marching to support their party leader against government-backed dissidents

# Mugabe twists London's arm

**Andrew Meldrum in Harare**

ZIMBABWE'S white farming community has come under renewed attack by President Robert Mugabe, who is threatening to seize hundreds of farms unless the British government provides more funds for his stalled programme to redistribute land to poor blacks.

On Monday the British high commission in Harare responded with a renewed appeal for a conference on land involving all interested Zimbabweans and foreign donors: an idea Mr Mugabe has already described as a possible delaying tactic by London.

Addressing the central committee of his party, the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front, at the weekend, Mr Mugabe said: "This land was taken from our people by the colonialists and no payment was made for it. Our people were just told to go . . . This is what we are going to do."

He blamed a lack of British funds for the delays in the resettlement programme, and implied that his government would pay for the white-owned farms only if Britain provided the money.

Mr Mugabe said he had recently told the British government: "We do not have the money to buy back the land, which was not paid for in the first place. We said, if they have the money or aid to give us so that we can pay for the land acquired, then they should give it to us and we will pay."

He said the British Foreign Secretary, Malcolm Rifkind, had responded with a letter suggesting "a national open meeting on the land acquisition issue, encompassing all interested groups including donor agencies like the World Bank". Mr Mugabe said this might be a delaying tactic.

Since Zimbabwe's independence in 1980, Britain has provided more than $45 million for the purchase of white-owned land to be resettled by black farmers. But the Mugabe government's 1980 plan to resettle 160,000 black families has fallen far short of its target: only 65,000 families have resettled on previously white-owned land. Even more disappointing, many of those families are not successfully producing crops and remain dependent on government assistance.

In 1992 the Zimbabwean parliament passed the Land Acquisition Act, authorising the government to buy land compulsorily. Two years later it was revealed that the first farms compulsorily purchased had been allocated to cabinet ministers, top civil servants and army generals.

Earlier this month the government imposed a 10 per cent tax on all sales of the tobacco crop, which has threatened the viability of tobacco, Zimbabwe's main export earner and biggest source of employment.

# Seoul eyes cheap labour

**John Gittings**

AS SOUTH KOREA faces its worst industrial unrest for years, officials in Seoul are casting covetous eyes on the docile labour force across the border in North Korea.

They have a vision of steady rapprochement with Pyongyang in which the North's large and semi-idle workforce can be enlisted to do work which, in the age of globalisation, is now too expensive in the South.

This is preferred to the collapse of the Kim Il-sung dynasty and reunification — which could cause chaos in the North and a flood of southbound refugees.

"We have already put the idea of economic complementarity at meetings of technocrats," said one South Korean official. "The problem is how to discuss it with the political leadership in the North."

The two Koreas are said to be taking part in secret negotiations in Beijing, although both sides have publicly refused proposals for direct talks.

Last week, striking South Korean public utility employees backed down in the face of government threats to use force, but workers at Hyundai and other automobile plants have stepped up their protests. The employees have been encouraged by government moves — made under international pressure — to drop restrictive trade union legislation.

In the past two years South Korea's labour shortage has led to a policy of hiring foreign "industrial trainees" — a euphemism for cheap labour — to work in factories, fishing and on construction sites. More than 70,000 workers have been recruited from Nepal, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and other poorer Asian countries.

But North Korean workers would be a far more attractive proposition. Visitors report that factories in the North are working at half normal production: per capita GNP is only 15 per cent of that in the South and wages are even lower.

Some projects have already begun. Daewoo has opened a clothing factory at Nampo in the North, transporting its workers to be trained in China.

The South also looks longingly at North Korea's economic assets in the ground. Coal production is 25 million tons against 7.5 million in the South. The North's reserves of iron ore could reduce Seoul's dependence on large imports from abroad.

Seoul's longer-term vision appears to be of a Korean peninsula which — although politically divided — presents a united economy capable of standing up to world competition.



# Boy 'forced to rape his dead mother'

**Ian Geoghegan in The Hague**

**A MUSLIM survivor of a Bosnian prison camp told the war crimes tribunal at The Hague last week how a drunken Serb soldier shot dead a young man after ordering him to rape his dead mother, killed by the same soldier moments before.**

**Suljeman Besic, aged 46, a former lumberjack, told the United Nations war crimes trial of the Bosnian Serb Dusan Tadic how the mother, in her mid-thirties, had brought food to her son in the Trnopolje camp in north-west Bosnia.**

**He said the soldier shouted at the woman that he would kill her if she did not tell him where her husband was. He then ordered her to strip off her upper clothes.**

**"She was crying terribly, but she took them off," Mr Besic said. "Then I heard firing and saw her lying on her back. He shot her in the head. The son was screaming so much you had to close your ears. The soldier told the son to get naked so everyone could see and then said these words to him: 'Now I will make you rape your dead mother'."**

**Mr Besic said prisoners were ordered by Serbs to watch or be killed. "I heard firing and saw the boy fall next to his mother." The soldier was led away in handcuffs by other guards but was back on duty the following day, Mr Besic said.**

**He described why prisoners were unable to treat a fellow inmate's gaping, maggot-infested wounds — crosses gouged on his front and back. "When we looked on his back where they had cut him there were worms, live worms, wriggling around and we tried to take them out . . . but the stench was so horrible you could not get near him."**

**Mr Besic was testifying during the seventh week of Mr Tadic's trial. Mr Tadic, aged 40, is accused of killing and maiming non-Serbs at will in three prison camps in the Prijedor region of Bosnia in 1992. He claims to be the victim of mistaken identity.**

**Mr Besic, who said he knew Mr Tadic before the war, said he smelled something unpleasant just outside the camp and "saw a heap of people wrapped in something, dead people . . . about 20 bodies. They were placed as sardines, one on top of the other. Their heads were shattered. I concluded they were not killed with firearms."**

**One day, Mr Besic said, he awoke to find all the men in his building crying. Taken to the complex that housed women and children, he was shown the blood-spattered bodies of two girls in their early teens lying by an outside toilet. Inside were more girls' bodies, some naked, as well as the bodies of four elderly men "slaughtered, with blood all around".**

**Other inmates told him groups of Serb soldiers had arrived in the night to select girls they liked. "Elderly women trying to save them were killed," he said.**

**The trial continues this week. — *Reuter***

# Muslims search for missing relatives

**Julian Borger in Sarajevo**

THE Bosnian war has produced many books, but none quite like this — a hefty paperback half an inch thick bound in plain white. Its alphabetical list of names and accompanying digits and codes reads like a telephone directory. But it is arguably the most important volume to emerge from the four years of conflict.

The book is the list of Bosnia's missing, published this month by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and distributed worldwide as part of its search for more than 12,000 people unaccounted for. That figure is almost certainly an underestimate. The ICRC expects the book's second edition to be far bigger, as more and more families search for lost relatives, in one of the biggest manhunts since the second world war.

The entries — giving names, dates and places of disappearance — are coded and abbreviated to fit on a single line, but behind each line on each of the 300 pages lies a horrific story of people taken from their homes at night and never seen since; of their relatives' frantic daily search, scouring newspapers and questioning strangers.

Each morning in Sarajevo, anguished families appear at the ICRC office, an ugly yellow building near the former front line whose once-fashionable mirrored glass has been splintered by dozens of mortars and hundreds of bullets.

One morning last week, Amela Hodzic stood at the ICRC reception desk and announced she had come to find her husband, Sead. There was no mention of him in the book, nor in the more up-to-date computer database, so Mrs Hodzic was asked to fill in a tracing request and talk to two ICRC staff, Mirjana Jokic, a Serb woman from Sarajevo, and Joelle Jenny, the French-Swiss head of the Sarajevo tracing department.

Mrs Hodzic recalls the events of her husband's disappearance, occasionally reaching into a scuffed black bag for documents, as if to prove her husband was once a living, breathing person. The story she tells is one of thousands being told in Red Cross offices around the country. (Amela Hodzic and Mirjana Jokic are not real names; both have been changed in line with ICRC rules on privacy.)

Mrs Hodzic last saw her husband in July 1995. They were living in Zepa, a Muslim enclave surrounded by Bosnian Serb forces from the first months of the war. That month Zepa capitulated to a Serb attack. The women and children were offered safe passage to government-held territory. Sead Hodzic, like many Zepa men, decided to take his own chances and walk to freedom. He said goodbye to his wife and the children and walked away.

"There were lots of groups of men going in different directions," Mrs Hodzic says. "He was in a group of 15. They almost reached government territory when they walked on to a minefield. The others ran away, but my husband stepped on a mine and lost a leg. His friend also lost a leg, and the two of them were left there."

Soon after, survivors said, Serb vehicles were seen in the area, but by the time that the next group of Muslim escapers passed near the spot, there was no one to be seen.

For eight months, nothing was heard. Then a woman in the central Bosnian town of Vares received a call from an anonymous man, who said he had seen Sead alive in a hospital in Serb territory. The caller asked the woman to find the family, saying he would ring again with more details.

At this point, the two Red Cross workers exchange glances. Families of the missing are often tantalised with bogus offers of help, and part with large sums of money in the hope they can ransom their loved ones, in most cases long dead. Mrs Hodzic's brother went to Vares to talk to the woman, but the mysterious caller has not rung back.

Ms Jokic writes the details down on a tracing request. Mrs Hodzic is told her husband's case will be added to the data base, and the first of a series of requests will be put to the Bosnian Serb authorities for details of his whereabouts. Mrs Hodzic wants the ICRC to scour Serb-controlled eastern Bosnia, but the tracers tell her the information is too vague. From time to time allegations have surfaced of secret prison camps where thousands of the missing have allegedly been sighted. The ICRC says it investigates every specific allegation but so far, according to Ms Jenny, it has found little more than "rust and dust".

The tracers know that most searches can only end in the mass graves scattered across Bosnia. But the exhumation of those graves is a long way off, and identification of the thousands of buried corpses will be near impossible.

For Mrs Hodzic, there was no good news last week. Her husband's name went into the Red Cross computer, but nothing came out. In all probability, nothing ever will. For thousands of Bosnians, the end of the war is just the beginning of an agonising limbo — half-mourning, half-waiting.

# UN lifts arms embargo

THE ARMS embargo on the countries of former Yugoslavia, one of the most controversial Western policies during the Balkan conflict, was lifted last week, paving the way for the American-led rearmament of Bosnia, *writes Julian Borger*.

The United Nations secretary-general, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, formally ended the blockade on heavy weapons imports when he forwarded a report on Balkan arms control to the UN security council.

Officials in New York said the security council and the UN sanctions committee had approved the suspension of the embargo. The joint Nato and Western European Union naval force enforcing the blockade in the Adriatic is to stand down.

The shuffling of papers at UN headquarters was a mundane end for a measure that bitterly divided the Nato allies during the war.

Britain and France strongly supported the sanctions, arguing that they helped to quarantine the conflict, but most United States policy-makers believed the embargo on the Muslim-led Bosnian army left it defenceless against an overwhelmingly superior Serb force.

The US agreed to the embargo to prevent a rift in the alliance, but Washington has admitted having turned a blind eye to Iranian arms supplies, which were smuggled through Croatia to the Bosnian army in 1994 and 1995.

The end of the sanctions will allow for the equalising of the opposing forces in Bosnia with arms supplied from the US and the Middle East, but Nato is determined that it should not lead to an uncontrolled arms race.

The Nato-led peace implementation force (I-For) says it will monitor all weapons imports and ensure they comply with the regional arms agreement signed in Florence this month, which envisages deep cuts in Serb armouries.

Under the deal, brokered by the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the Serbian-dominated Yugoslav army will have to destroy a quarter of its tanks, artillery, warplanes and other heavy equipment within 16 months.

The next biggest force, the Croatian army, will be kept more or less at the present level at 40 per cent of the new Yugoslav ceilings. The total forces in Bosnia will be the same as in Croatia, but split 2:1 between the Muslim-Croat Federation and the largely autonomous Serb Republic.

The Bosnian Serbs will face the most radical cuts in the region, nearly halving their present force. The poorly-armed federation would have to acquire significant amounts of new equipment to reach its new ceilings.

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
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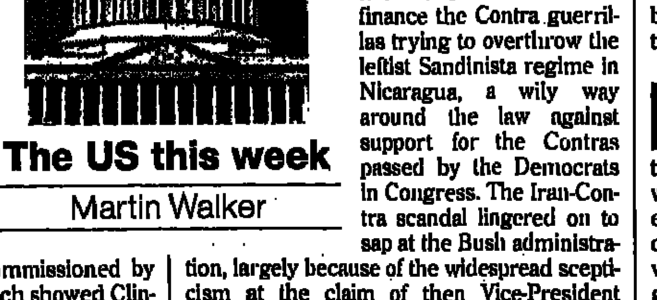
# Politicians left with little image to tarnish

TO JUDGE by the newspaper headlines and television news bulletins, this has been as bad a week for scandals as the Clintons have ever suffered. Each new day brought a fresh report, and by the end of the week one of the president's aides confided that, at last, he understood the subtlety of the Chinese water torture. It was waiting for that next, inevitable drip that hurt.

First, the Republican majority on the Senate Whitewater committee leaked different bits of their report on successive days. There was a leak about a request for perjury charges against high-level aides, another leak about Hillary Clinton being accused of lying (which the report carefully did not say), and yet another leak about her organising a cover-up. The Republicans still managed to garner front-page headlines on the morning after publication with the claim that the Clintons had demonstrated "a systematic abuse of power". It was as accomplished a piece of news management as Washington has ever witnessed.

Then jury selection began in a new trial in Arkansas of two bankers accused of fraudulently concealing cash payments to Clinton's campaign for the governorship in 1990. The last of the surviving Arkansans in the president's palace guard, his close friend and adviser Bruce Lindsey, was then named in that trial as "an unindicted co-conspirator". This was a deliberate echo of the Watergate affair which forced Richard Nixon to resign the presidency 22 years ago.

Finally, the White House director of personnel security, Craig Livingstone, was placed on administrative leave, pending inquiries into "Filegate". He is a former Pittsburgh nightclub bouncer who got his White House job after long service as advance man for several Democratic campaigns. The appearance in his office vault of FBI files on more than 400 Republicans, including the former secretary of state James Baker and the former press secretary Martin Fitzwater, has evoked more Republican complaints of Nixonian behaviour by the Clinton White House.



**The US this week**

Martin Walker

And yet nobody is at all clear whether the voters care about all this. There was one poll a week ago, commissioned by CNN and Time magazine, which showed Clinton's lead shrinking from 20 to 6 points. But no other poll echoes it. The Washington Post-ABC news poll, taken more recently than the Time-CNN, found Clinton at 55 per cent, Dole at 35 per cent. Then a CBS-New York Times poll found Clinton's lead widening, from 15 to 19 points. The latest Gallup poll was even better for Clinton, showing him winning by nine points even if the popular General Colin Powell joined Dole on the ticket. The Democratic party's internal polls also show no erosion in the president's lead, at a steady 15 per cent among registered and likely voters.

The individual state polls were even more reassuring for the president. In California, the Field poll showed Clinton's lead unchanged, despite Bob Dole's campaign swing through the state. In Florida, which is normally safe Republican territory, Clinton is 13 points ahead. The lead is 33 points in New York, 23 points in usually Republican New Hampshire. Apart from his home state of Kansas, Dole's best state is Texas, and even in Texas, where he got only 37 per cent of the vote four years ago when he lost the state to President Bush, Clinton is running neck and neck with him.

Perhaps the voters are bored stiff with scandal, or at least by the role that partisan politics now play in its concoction. Senator Alfonse D'Amato of New York, who lives under so many ethical clouds that he looks like a human rain forest, has been a particularly unconvincing prosecutor on the Whitewater committee. He is also co-chairman of the Dole election campaign, and it shows. Bear in mind that the original Watergate inquiry into Richard Nixon in 1973 was carefully managed to ensure that on each important vote the Senate committee was unanimous in its bipartisan verdict. Last week, all the Republicans said that the Clintons were abusing their power, and all the Democrats insisted that they were innocent.

The culture of scandal has got out of hand. After Nixon's fall, the only president to have been spared it was his short-lived replacement, Gerald Ford. Jimmy Carter, as ethical a man as ever served in the White House, was hounded for the alleged lapses of Georgia banker Bert Lance, his director of the Office of Management and Budget. Lance was eventually acquitted of all charges against him, and after the long, bitter struggle to clear his name, he recites in his memoirs that he felt it important to forgive all his tormentors.

Lance went to see one of them, the New York Times columnist William Safire, who had also been a speech writer in the Nixon White House, and remained deeply attached to Nixon's memory. Lance asked why the attacks against him had been so relentless, and in Lance's version, Safire replied that it was important "to stop you getting the Fed". The Fed was the Federal Reserve, the US equivalent of a central bank which sets the interest rates. Instead of Lance, the Fed was entrusted to Paul Volcker, whose attack on inflation with harsh interest rates may have sunk Carter's chances of re-election.

Then came President Reagan, whose last two years in office were constantly tarnished by the Iran-Contra scandal. This began with secret attempts to win the release of hostages in Lebanon by the sale of arms to Iran. It then escalated into an imaginative use of those funds to finance the Contra guerrillas trying to overthrow the leftist Sandinista regime in Nicaragua, a wily way around the law against support for the Contras passed by the Democrats in Congress. The Iran-Contra scandal lingered on to sap at the Bush administration, largely because of the widespread scepticism at the claim of then Vice-President George Bush that he had been "out of the loop" when decisions were taken. On the Friday before the 1992 presidential election, the independent counsel into Iran-Contra, Lawrence Walsh, filed charges against Reagan's defence secretary Caspar Weinberger, which also implicated Bush. A small recovery by Bush in the opinion polls suddenly stopped, and Republicans still claim that they were thus robbed of victory.

The Bush administration suffered another scandal, pushed most relentlessly by William Safire, who called it Iraqgate. This concerned subsidies for Iraq to buy US food exports before the Gulf war, and was all tangled up with the alleged anti-Semitism of the Bush administration and its coolness towards the Likud government of Israel's Yitzhak Shamir. Vague, complex and wrapped up in foreign matters, Iraqgate never caught the public imagination and sputtered out, though it infuriated Bush at the time.

Over the years, however, the perception steadily grew among astute politicians that an incumbent president could be constantly undermined even by a low-grade but persistent scandal.

This was not confined to the presidency. Congressman Newt Gingrich ran just such a campaign against the Democratic Speaker Jim Wright. Some petty and long-standing privileges in the House bank and post office were then blown up into scandals which toppled the powerful chairman of the Ways and Means committee, Dan Rostenkowski, and helped discredit a swathe of long-standing Democratic incumbents, just as the Republicans mounted their big push to take over Congress.




Not all the campaigns worked. A squalid effort to destroy the openly gay Massachusetts Democrat Barney Frank over one unwise choice of lover did not succeed. The current majority leader, Congressman Dick Armey, was even forced into a public apology for one nasty slur.

A strategic price had to be paid for the tactical advantages all these "scandals" gave to one party or the other. The public began to distrust all of them, to sneer at the politicians as a breed, and to be prepared to believe almost anything of almost all of them. This may be one reason why Clinton is not destroyed by the barrage of innuendo and accusation.

POLITICIANS now carry their scandals around with them like some personal deformity. To be powerful these days is to be assigned your own independent counsel with the task of making inquiries into your ethics. Gingrich has his own independent counsel, who must have been interested last week by the publication of the annual congressional income disclosure forms. Speaker Gingrich, it emerged, had made less than $500,000 from his book To Renew America, for which Rupert Murdoch had been prepared to pay an advance of $4.5 million.

A public outcry at the time persuaded Gingrich to accept a token advance of $1 and make his money from the royalty fees on books sold. He claims to have made $1.2 million in royalties, but then paid out $750,000 in expenses. This is not detailed in any convincing way, except that $120,000 was paid to a co-writer. Another sum went to his agent. Another $50,000 went to Earning By Learning, a charity that pays poor children to read books.

Gingrich's independent counsel is investigating his use of the Gopac political organisation, and whether its funds were improperly used to finance his own campaigns. The accomplished commerce secretary, the late Ron Brown, was threatened with an independent counsel to probe his own complex financial affairs. That all ended when his US Air Force plane crashed into a Croatian hillside, which led Gingrich to make some waspish allegations about papers in Brown's office safe being burned before the announcement of his death was made.

Given his own problems, Gingrich might have been more charitable, but there is a viciously partisan mood in Washington these days. This helps explains why so many senators are resigning this year, says the Republican William Cohen, who sat on one of the original Watergate committees as a congressman.

It also helps explain why the public seems prepared to believe almost anything of the people they elect to govern them and make the laws. And why not, when those legislators have to spend so much of their waking hours telephoning rich people and richer corporations to ask for money?

America has locked itself into an inherently corrupt system, in which access to public office depends on access to vast sums of money. But those sums can be generated in adequate amounts only by people and organisations who want something from those in power. The 1992 election season, for House and Senate and White House, cost just over $1,000 million. Only Ross Perot does not have to ride this money-go-round: he is rich enough to finance his outsize ego.

Even Dole's fund-raising background is as clouded as most. Dole was exquisitely ambushed in California by Vice-President Al Gore, who accused Dole of being addicted, not to tobacco, but to tobacco money. It is true: while Clinton raises most of his funds from lawyers, Dole's biggest donors are the cancer kings. Democrats now send Butt-man, a character dressed as a cigarette, to mock at Dole events. Dole ducked and weaved and muttered about marijuana being dangerous too, and what was Clinton doing about that.

It is all rather sad, but not quite as cruel as the way the late-night TV presenters are now targeting the 72-year-old Republican. Jay Leno and David Letterman trade jibes each night. There was the one about Dole being so old that when he and his first wife divorced, she kept the family cave. There was another about that fossilised dinosaur skull in Speaker Gingrich's office, the one Bob Dole caught himself. And the day Dole cleaned out his desk, he found two quill pens and a heap of parchment. The cruellest came from Leno, heir to the legendary Johnny Carson, who jibed, "Bob Dole says that quitting the Senate leaves him free to roam the country, but at his age there's a fine line between roaming and just wandering off."

This helps explain why Dole and the Republicans find it so hard to gain traction against Clinton, festooned with scandals though he is. But then he was similarly tarnished four years ago, and still beat Bush. Maybe the public is sick of the constant sleaze. Maybe they don't care. The oddest poll of all last week was the Gallup, which asked who had the better moral character. Dole beat Clinton by a whopping margin of 53:31. Then they asked the same people how they would vote. Clinton won 57:38.

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# Greek myth with earthly powers

**OBITUARY**

Andreas Papandreou

ANDREAS PAPANDREOU, who has died at the age of 77, was one of Greece's most complex politicians and personalities. The socialist leader, three times a prime minister, will be remembered as the man who legitimised the left after a brutal civil war — though he did it in a way that often exasperated Greece's Western allies.

His legacy was founded as much on his love for the unpredictable — in 1989, at the start of his battle against heart disease, he married an air hostess 36 years his junior — as it was on his determination to hold on to power even in the face of death.

Not even Papandreou's greatest admirers could believe his seemingly superhuman ability to survive the health problems that brought him to the brink of death a number of times in recent years. His discharge, in March, from the Onassis Heart Hospital where he spent four months on a life support system, was met with widespread astonishment.

Because power ended up being his life-force, the charismatic politician only reluctantly agreed to make way for a successor last January. But, nursed by his headstrong wife Dimitra "Mimi" Liani, he died resolutely refusing to surrender the powerful post as leader of his Panhellenic Socialist (Pasok) party.

From the moment he returned to Greece in 1959 after years living in the United States as an academic, to his meteoric rise to power in 1981, Papandreou courted controversy.

What mattered most to the leader was his mission to introduce socialism to his homeland after decades of rightwing rule following the defeat of communist insurgents by British and US-backed nationalists in the 1946-49 civil war. The electoral victories of Pasok in 1981, 1985 and 1993 demonstrated, beyond doubt, that his project had succeeded. In Papandreou, the vast strata of underprivileged, newly-urbanised Greeks at last found a champion. But the mission required him to change his policies and personae at a rate that surprised even his most staunch supporters. The Pasok "father" will go down in Greek history as a crucial post-war democratic leader, but posterity may not look as kindly on his many contradictions or his machiavellian character traits which were the origin of the Papandreou myth.

As the strong man of Greek politics he seemed able to weather any number of storms. But scandal also stuck to the socialists' record of handling power. In 1990, he became Greece's only civilian leader to be accused of serious wrongdoing because of his role in a multi-million dollar embezzlement at the Bank of Crete. In January 1992, he was acquitted of the charges by a single vote at a special tribunal set up to hear the case — which he snubbed from day one — and less than two years later he was re-elected.

He was an arch populist — Greeks always referred to him as "Andreas" — and no other politician's name had ever become a household word: it was a source of great pride to Papandreou. But by the time of his death after 30 years dominating Greek politics, there were few who knew, or could tell, the real Papandreou.

Yet, having changed the political landscape of Greece, his end was not illustrious. During his last months in office he was felt to have improperly surrendered himself to Mimi, who soon became his chief of staff. The man who won the affection of the Greek working classes by eschewing crass materialism during his tenure of office was known to have spent more than $1.5 million on his new wife's luxurious pink home.

In reality, privilege was nothing new to a man born the son of George Papandreou, a liberal politician who led the Centre Union party before serving as prime minister. Born on the island of Chios, he was educated at Athens College, the country's most prestigious school, along with Greece's élite. Unlike his peers, he kept out of the limelight in Greece — and set sail, aged 20, for the US after a brief spell in prison for his opposition to the rightwing Metaxas dictatorship.

Having gained a doctorate in economics at Harvard and served during the war as a non-combatant in the US navy, he took US citizenship. The climax of his career was his appointment as chairman of the economics department at the University of California, Berkeley.

He was a mainstream liberal democrat, and campaigned for Adlai Stevenson in the 1952 presidential election won by Eisenhower. In 1959, Constantine Karamanlis, leader of the right, found Andreas (at the request of his father) a job heading the newly-established Centre for Economic Research in Athens.

On gaining power in 1964, George made his son a cabinet minister, though he said Andreas was the last person he would ever want to see lead the country. During his childhood and for much of his youth, Papandreou had a notoriously bad relationship with his father — who deserted Andreas's mother for a famous Greek actress when the boy was 10 years old.

The mid-1960s were hectic years for Greece, as the country lurched from one political crisis to another, beginning with the inter-communal struggles between Greeks and Turks on Cyprus. Believing his country's over-dependence on Washington was to blame for most of its woes, Papandreou renounced his US citizenship and traded his liberal views for increasingly radical ones. Overnight, he became the *bête noire* of the US embassy, the royal palace, and the growing number of hard-core rightists in the armed forces.



**Prime time Papandreou . . . the Greek leader addressing a meeting in Salonika during his campaign for the 1985 elections**

PHOTOGRAPH: DON McPHEE

When, in 1967, a group of junior army officers seized power in a clear bid to pre-empt a widely predicted Centre Union victory at the polls, Papandreou junior was among the first to be targeted. He was imprisoned, but released eight months later with the help, ironically, of powerful friends in Washington, who included the economist John K Galbraith. For the seven years that the Colonels were in power, Papandreou became immersed in frantic anti-junta activity in Sweden and Canada while resuming his life as a university academic.

Exiled compatriots rushed to join his resistance group, the Panhellenic Liberation Movement (PAK). The group, which also boasted such personalities as the late actress Melina Mercouri, spearheaded the international propaganda campaign against the Colonels, smuggling arms and communications equipment, often against the greatest odds, to freedom fighters in Greece. It was this activity that soon (and usefully) led to the birth of the Andreas Papandreou myth.

RETURNING to Greece on the collapse of the Colonels' regime in 1974, alongside Karamanlis, the country's new centre-right prime minister, Papandreou set about creating Pasok out of PAK. For most of the electorate, expecting him to relaunch the Centre Union, it was the first surprise in a political career that would be proverbial for its unpredictability.

Inspired loosely by Marxist ideas, Pasok offered a catch-all ideology. Well-organised, especially in the countryside, it offered a home to a disparate group of hardline leftwingers who had never found shelter in the KKE, Greece's ultra-orthodox communist party, and liberals.

Indeed, it was on the slogan of *allagi* (change) that Pasok swept to power after another seven years. From winning only 13.6 per cent of the vote in 1974, Pasok went on to a landslide victory in 1981 with over 48 per cent of the vote, winning 172 seats in the 300-member parliament.

For the first time, the vast army of defeated civil war leftwingers and villagers who had flocked to the cities after the second world war — at least half the population, who had long feared the watchful eye of Greece's rightwing governments — got a place in the sun, the symbol Papandreou astutely gave his party.

On winning power, Papandreou redefined himself, dropping his academic profile for that of a leather-jacketed populist hero who drank as fast as he danced, although the haughty air was always maintained in his dealings with Pasok cadres.

During his first term in office, Papandreou set about redeeming his pre-election pledges. He transformed the country, established a social welfare service, including a Greek national health system (with generous support from European Union funds), promoted women's rights by introducing one of Europe's most progressive family laws, and boosted the infrastructure in the countryside. But his second administration was mired by strikes, scandals and setbacks in local elections.

Radically tempering the rhetoric of his early days, he abandoned his past populism and, under pressure from Brussels, implemented tough economic stabilisation measures in a bid to tackle mammoth budget deficits caused largely by his own free-spending ways. Although opponents now castigated their policies as Thatcherite, the socialists were poised for another electoral victory in 1989 when the scandal at the Bank of Crete broke. The furor, with Papandreou accused of masterminding a plan to remove millions from state deposits, marked the lowest point of his political career.

His ignominious defeat at the polls was followed by three years in the political wilderness. His health was waning, and few believed he could make a political comeback. But, with the outgoing New Democracy party racked by inner dissent over its handling of the highly charged Macedonia imbroglio, Papandreou defied expectation — cruising to victory in October 1993. "After the political vendetta that was waged against me in 1989, this is my ultimate vindication," he said.

"Because he made more promises than he could keep, it is debatable whether he should be categorised as the last of the dinosaurs or the first of the modernisers. What promises he did honour, however, changed the face of Greece. Even his enemies — and he had many — would concede that his death concludes a vibrant political era.

**Helena Smith**

Andreas George Papandreou, politician, born February 5, 1919; died June 23, 1996

# Kenya Asians prepare to fight back

**Greg Barrow in Nairobi**

THE minority Asian community in Kenya is preparing a robust defence of its role in Kenyan society after an opposition leader called for the expulsion of corrupt Indian immigrants, alleging they had taken over the economy and were exploiting native Africans.

The Asian community has had a low political profile, but the allegations have put senior community leaders on the offensive. Earlier this month they published a four-page supplement in all the national newspapers to highlight the contribution of Indian freedom fighters and entrepreneurs in Kenyan history.

"We have come to the stage where the very word 'Asian' means something nasty," says Swaram Sodi, the chairman of the Eastern Action Club for Africa, which raised the money for the supplement. "The Japanese used to have this problem after the second world war, but they showed through good publicity that they were not evil. Now, we Asians in Kenya are going to do the same."

A policy document published by Kenneth Matiba, the chairman of the opposition Ford Asili party, has galvanised the Asian community. Entitled The Asian Question, it argues that immigrants from Gujarat in western India have taken control of the Kenyan economy to the detriment of indigenous Kenyans.

The policy paper, signed by senior members of the Ford Asili party, says Asians are responsible for most of the corruption in Kenya.

Mr Matiba's argument has been weakened by the disclosure that he himself employs a mainly Asian staff to run the accounts and administration of his businesses.

The allegations have angered second- and third-generation Kenyan Asians. "How on earth can it be construed that we are controlling the economy?" says Kul Bushan, a journalist and publisher. "We are not controlling, we are contributing to the economy through hard work, enterprise and skills."

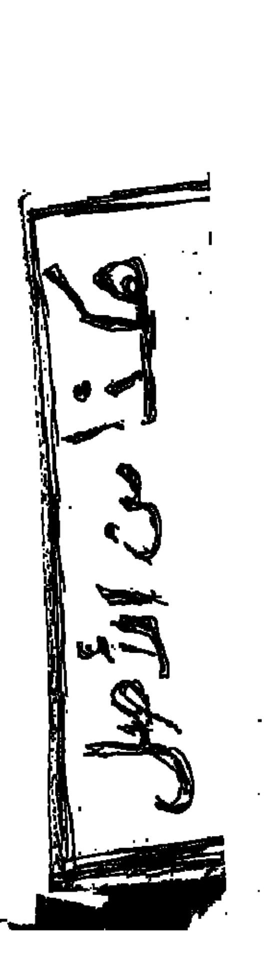
Asian community leaders are worried that Mr Matiba has hit a nerve with working-class Kenyans who feel exploited by Asian employers.

"The last month has been a very difficult time for us," Mr Sodi says. "First we ignored it, but then we found our shops in Nairobi being invaded. Asians have been evicted from their homes, and lorries full of Africans have yelled 'Asians go home'."

The hostility has been largely restricted to Nairobi, a stronghold of the Ford Asili party. Asians have received some assurances from the governing Kanu party of President Daniel arap Moi.

"These politicians are desperate and jingoistic leaders," says Nicholas Biwott, an MP and close confidant of President Moi. "What do they want by calling for the expulsion of Asians? Do they want to witness bloodshed similar to that in Uganda and Rwanda?"

Such support is conditional. Most Kenyan Asians do earn far higher incomes than African workers, and President Moi will be looking to them to help fill his Kanu party coffers in the run-up to elections due next year.



**The Week in Britain** James Lewis

# Blair walks tall in Germany but skulks on workers' rights

FOR A MAN who has yet to win a general election, Labour's leader, Tony Blair, made a strong impression on the German political establishment when he visited Bonn last week to set out his party's stance on Europe. He was received by both President Roman Herzog and Chancellor Helmut Kohl; was warmly applauded by business leaders as he put the Labour line on European monetary union; and fêted by the Social Democrats as a leader of the modern Left.

Though the mood music was harmonious, much of what Mr Blair actually said was ambiguous and not significantly different from what has been said from time to time by the Prime Minister.

Britain, said Mr Blair, should be "succeeding in Europe not failing, winning not losing, walking tall, not skulking on the sidelines". On the other hand, "you should not expect us to agree with everything that comes from Bonn or Brussels".

Labour would "not seek to merge our national identities into an international superstate"; but a Labour government would "seek a European global framework for key decisions that affect all our lives". In principle, Labour considered a single currency could have benefits and would not try to obstruct it. But if economies linked by a single currency were not "genuinely and sustainably convergent", there would be a risk to weaker economies, and especially to jobs.

Mr Blair, like John Major, has Eurosceptics to placate. He also has a trade union audience to address, and some of it is displeased by the way the leader is back-tracking on pledges made by his predecessor, John Smith, on employment rights. A Labour pre-election document on workers' rights does not, for example, promise to reverse any of the Conservatives' hated anti-union legislation.

Mr Smith had promised that workers would have employment rights — such as protection against unfair dismissal — from their first day in a job. That has now been abandoned. A pledge to outlaw "zero-hours" contracts — where workers are required to be on continuous call with no guarantee of work — has been watered down; other abuses, which union leaders hoped to see stamped out, will now simply be "examined".

Eric Hobsbawm, page 12

IN AN EFFORT to create "clear blue water" between itself and the Opposition in education policy, the Government plans to establish "a grammar school in every town". Grant-maintained schools which have opted out of town hall control will be allowed to "select" up to half their intake (by interview or examination) and local authority schools up to a fifth. The Funding Agency for Schools (FAS), which channels state funds into opt-out schools, will also be empowered to build grammar schools, even in places where there is a surplus of places in existing comprehensive schools.

Mr Major, an admirer of grammar schools, is doubtless hoping that his plans will release a wave of parental demands for new selective schools, particularly in Labour-dominated areas traditionally hostile to any form of selection. The Tories also hope to embarrass Labour since Mr Blair and his shadow health secretary, Harriett Harman, have both chosen to send their children to grant-maintained schools.

It is unlikely that many new grammar schools, costing around £10 million each, will be built since the £30 million budget of the FAS is not to be increased. Labour's education spokesman, David Blunkett, dismissed the idea as "a sham to satisfy the Conservative right wing".

JONATHAN AITKEN, the former Treasury Chief Secretary, was cleared by a committee of MPs of any wrongdoing in the arms-to-Iran affair. The Trade and Industry Select Committee said it found no evidence that he knew of illegal exports to Iran by a Lincolnshire arms company, BMARC, of which he was a former non-executive director.

The former chairman of BMARC, Gerald James, who was at the centre of the allegations against Mr Aitken, said he was shocked at the way his evidence had been dismissed and complained that the committee's purpose was to give Mr Aitken a "clean bill of health" rather than to uncover the truth behind the scandal.

Mr Aitken resigned from the Cabinet after facing a string of damaging accusations and is still engaged in a long-running legal battle over allegations in the Guardian and on Granada TV about his links with Arab businessmen.

THE LEADER of a gang that stole treasures worth more than £40,000 from 500 churches has been imprisoned for 10 years. Oxford Crown Court was told that Simon Draycott had led a highly organised gang of 30 professional criminals who had effectively destroyed part of the nation's heritage.

Posing as an architectural enthusiast, he had taken advantage of the "open door" policy of churches to walk in and take what he wanted over a period of eight months. When churches were locked he asked for the key, pretending to be a worshipper. He concentrated on Gothic, Norman and Saxon churches, and sold "priceless" and irreplaceable religious artefacts to dealers in Britain and abroad.

One vicar whose church was robbed told the court that Britain's churches were "supermarkets without cash registers".

GAMBLERS in pubs and slot-machine arcades welcomed a further liberalisation in gaming laws, which more than doubles the previous limit in cash prizes from £4 to £10.

Machine operators hoped it would help them to recover some or all of the 12 per cent business they have lost since the launch of the National Lottery.

The National Council on Gambling was critical, claiming that even before the National Lottery there was already more gambling in Britain than in any other European country.



Wood cuts . . . Sculptor Walter Bailey with his latest work, celebrating the new kingfisher nature trail in woodland by Ardingly reservoir, near Haywards Heath, West Sussex PHOTO: ROGER BAMBER

# CRE says Britain has better race record than most of EU

**James Meikle**

BRITAIN'S race relations record is among the best in Europe despite concerns about deepening alienation among some young ethnic minority groups, the Commission for Racial Equality said last week.

A more upbeat message welcoming positive shifts in behaviour and attitudes, heralded in its annual report, is to be followed next month by publicity about the contribution black, Asian and Irish communities make to institutions and professions: London Underground, the National Health Service, the corner shop, university professorships and physicists.

But commission chairman Herman Ouseley warned against complacency and called for continuing "hard graft" and leadership from public figures, adding that much discrimination was covert and subtle.

Half of Britain's black and Asian communities had been born here, and "we ignore at our peril" the expectations of young people who wanted to be valued "as black or Asian and British", he said. Their alienation had helped cause last year's "skirmishes" in many parts of the country.

"Thankfully there were no major riots, but Bradford and Brixton came close . . . giving us a glimpse of the kind of social unrest none of us wants."

Mr Ouseley suggested that asylum legislation — and newspaper coverage of it — did not match the Government's claim that "fair but firm" race relations policies were in the best interests of all citizens.

"The notion of 'bogus' arrivals at British airports has taken root in our folklore, and every message reinforces the damaging and false stereotype of immigrants as people who only know a few words of English: benefits, asylum and lottery handouts."

But Mr Ouseley added: "We were able to draw some comfort from the knowledge that race relations in Britain during 1995 were as good as, if not better than, anywhere else in Europe, where intolerance and xenophobia have reached unacceptable levels . . . While we can give ourselves the occasional, well-deserved, congratulatory pat on the back as a nation, we can and must do more to improve the present situation."

Formal applications to the commission for help in pursuing race discrimination cases fell from a record 1,937 in 1994 to 1,682 last year, but previous dips in numbers have not lasted.

# MPs vote to change Bill of Rights

**Rebecca Smithers**

MPS VOTED by a large majority to alter the 300-year-old Bill of Rights, giving themselves unprecedented new powers to sue newspapers over reports of their parliamentary activities.

The MPs on Monday voted down Labour's attempt to strike out the controversial new clause — added to the Defamation Bill last month in the House of Lords — by 264 to 201.

The change was introduced as a result of a single-handed campaign by the former trade minister, Neil Hamilton, whose attempt to sue the Guardian over "cash for questions" allegations was stayed by the High Court after the newspaper pleaded the privileges conferred on MPs by the 1689 Bill of Rights.

Mr Hamilton served notice that he would reopen his case against the Guardian as soon as the bill receives royal assent.

As the bill reached its crucial report and third reading stage in the Commons, the shadow legal affairs spokesman, Paul Boateng, criticised the Government for allowing the clause to be rushed through Parliament with relatively little debate.

Last month peers overwhelmingly backed the amendment which effectively closes a legal loophole by overturning the law of parliamentary privilege, under which freedom of speech in Parliament cannot be questioned in a court.

The Guardian had successfully argued that privilege had left it unable to defend itself in Mr Hamilton's libel action in court, so it should not go ahead.

# Immigrant in arrest row

THE Home Office launched an urgent inquiry last week into why ministers were not told that Albert Tong, an illegal immigrant dragged "kicking and screaming" from a church where he had sought sanctuary, suffered from a medical condition, *writes Geoffrey Gibbs*.

Ann Widdecombe, the immigration minister, admitted that she was unaware that Mr Tong, aged 43, who has lived in Britain for 17 years, was ill. Officials later conceded that they had not told ministers.

Mr Tong fled his home in Cornwall to avoid being deported to Hong Kong. Church leaders condemned the forced removal from church sanctuary, as did the police surgeon who examined him to see whether he was fit to travel.

Mr Tong was arrested at the Methodist chapel in Marazion near Penzance last week, and was admitted to hospital after collapsing with what the Home Office said was a panic attack while in custody at Newquay police station. The hospital said Mr Tong might have suffered a slight heart attack.

Deportation would separate Mr Tong from Becky, his Cornish-born wife, and their three-year-old daughter, Monica. In a statement last week, the Rt Rev Michael Ball, Bishop of Truro, said the Roman Catholic, Methodist and Anglican churches condemned the Home Secretary's actions in breaking up a family.





# UK 'will pay high price' for beef war

**Guardian Reporters**

THE Government was this week facing up to the high price of its beef war with the European Union as the Florence summit produced a phased lifting of the ban on British exports and the immediate end to Britain's non-co-operation policy.

The Government must now face the pressures of a special summit in Dublin on October 19 to discuss closer political integration and make up for time lost by the beef dispute.

John Major welcomed the summit as a chance to clear the air. But the Swedish prime minister, Goran Persson, was one of many EU leaders to warn that, after the 12-week dispute over BSE-tainted cattle and Mr Major's policy of blocking EU business, the British government faces a more united and hostile EU. "I think the British will pay a very, very high price for what they have done."

Aware that progress in drawing up a new treaty — which most EU governments see as a step to closer union — has been slow, the other 14 leaders, led by President Jacques Chirac of France with the support of the German chancellor, Helmut Kohl, have asked the Irish government to call a special meeting of the heads of government after it assumes the EU presidency on July 1.

It will be held in Dublin, probably on October 19, a week after the Conservative party conference and coinciding with Sir James Goldsmith's Referendum Party's first conference in Brighton.

They identified a series of highly controversial reforms, including more majority vote decisions, greater powers for the European Parliament, and the pooling of sovereignty in key areas of foreign, security and defence policy, justice and immigration. Britain is in a small minority opposing change to the present treaty on almost all those points.

Despite the anger of Britain's partners about the use of more than 100 vetoes, the Foreign Secretary, Malcolm Rifkind, said the tactics had paid off. "For the first eight weeks of this very sad dispute, very little progress was made. In the last four weeks we have seen real progress of a substantial kind, and I am delighted," he said.

This claim was contradicted by others. "The British have got nothing through non-co-operation they would not have got anyway," the Irish prime minister, John Bruton, said.

The spokesman for the European Commission president, Jacques Santer, was even more blunt. "If the British had come forward earlier with their BSE eradication plan and a framework agreement proposal — which we only got in the last few days — this could have been achieved much earlier," Klaus van der Pas said.

With most Conservative Eurosceptics at Westminster now eager to end the beef dispute, the extra summit will become the focus of their efforts to prevent Mr Major being drawn into closer EU integration.

Member governments plan to change the rules of the EU to prevent a repeat of the disruptive tactics Britain employed against the beef ban. The Belgian prime minister, Jean-Luc Dehaene, said that no EU government should in future be able to veto decisions on matters unrelated to the disputed issue.

Mr Dehaene — vetoed by Mr Major for the Commission presidency — insisted that no other country should ever be able to follow the British example.

"We must take action . . . to ensure that we have more majority votes. But where decisions have to be taken by unanimity a country should only be able to use its veto for the dossier being discussed," he said. "If a country tries to use the veto in such a destructive way it should be subject to sanctions by the rest of the European Union."

The Florence beef negotiations meant there was no time for a serious debate on the key issues holding up progress in the Inter-Governmental Conference.

In keeping with their increasingly upbeat mood about the prospects for moving to a single currency in 1999, the leaders endorsed a series of progress reports on monetary union. These include arrangements for linking currencies inside and outside the euro bloc in a new exchange rate mechanism, and a "stability pact" binding single currency members to agreed economic objectives.

Germany is still pushing for tough and automatic sanctions on EMU countries which break the terms of Maastricht. But most EU countries backed a more flexible formula penalising only countries running persistent budget deficits.

## Details

**Britain has promised to:**
- Slaughter about 120,000 cattle most at risk from BSE, born since 1989
- Introduce an effective animal identification and movement recording system with official registration
- Pass laws to remove meat and bone meal from feed mills and farms and to clean up the premises and equipment
- Implement effectively the rule that animals older than 30 months must be killed and destroyed at the end of their working lives so they do not enter the food chain
- Improve methods for removing high-risk material from animal carcasses
- Submit all these measures to EU inspections
- Report on progress every two weeks to the European Commission
- End the policy of non-co-operation with EU business

**The five phases of lifting the export ban will cover:**
- Animals and meat from herds certified as having no history of BSE and no exposure to infected feed
- Embryos
- Animals born after a date yet to be decided and their meat
- Meat from animals aged under 30 months
- In the long run, meat from animals over 30 months
- In addition, the Commission will consider requests from any non-EU countries for permission to import British beef, providing that it will not be re-exported.

# Labour plan for 'flexible' welfare benefits criticised

**Guardian Reporters**

LABOUR on Monday ran into controversy over what it means by "flexible benefits" when it published its long-awaited welfare-to-work plans to get people off the dole.

Critics seized on proposals to pilot-test benefit variation as evidence that the party was abandoning its commitment to universal social security entitlement. Party leaders insisted the idea would be voluntary.

There was further concern on Labour's left wing that the plans did not include a commitment to scrap the Government's Jobseeker's Allowance and revert to entitlement to 12 months' unemployment benefit.

Chris Smith, shadow social security secretary, promised only that Labour would "review" the scheme once in office. It is understood that he dropped a commitment to abolish it after intervention by Tony Blair, the party leader.

Labour's plans aim to get an unspecified number of unemployed people into work by steps including:
- Personalising benefit and employment services by giving tailor-made help with skills training and job search, along lines of schemes in Australia and California;
- Merging benefit and employment advice offices in "one-stop shops" and introducing a single claim for for all main benefits;
- Encouraging jobless people to study and do voluntary work, removing penalties which limit both. They would also be given more scope for occasional paid employment;
- Giving people taking temporary or "uncertain" work an automatic right to re-entitlement to income support at their previous rate, should the job not work out.

Attention centred, however, on plans for a pilot scheme under which unemployed people could make "flexible local use" of benefit and training money.

Labour's policy document says: "For each claimant a nominal figure — equivalent to the expected expenditure on government training schemes and benefit income for people in their circumstances — will be 'given over' to case managers to be used in agreement with the individual in the best way to promote their job prospects."

Mr Smith said there would be no compulsion to vary benefit income: if individuals wished to continue drawing full entitlement, they would be fully at liberty to do so.

Paul Goggins, co-ordinator of Church Action on Poverty asked: "Will this new flexibility lead to lower social security payments? People on benefits can barely survive as it is."

# Anger at EU 'deal' on Rushdie fatwa

**Ian Black**

EUROPEAN Union countries are prepared to accept the validity of an Iranian fatwa ordering the killing of Salman Rushdie in return for assurances that Iran will not attempt to execute the death warrant.

Britain is certain strongly to oppose the deal, which is expected to be pursued by Ireland when it assumes the EU presidency next month, on the grounds that Iran cannot be trusted.

But diplomatic sources say a majority of EU members now supports a compromise under which letters to be exchanged with Iran would include a specific reference to the continuing "validity and irrevocability" of the seven-year-old fatwa in return for written guarantees that Tehran will not send agents to murder the novelist.

The fatwa, a religious edict theoretically binding on all Muslims, was issued in 1989 by the late Ayatollah Khomeini after publication of Mr Rushdie's novel The Satanic Verses.

Failure to proceed on the basis of a draft text acceptable to Iran would mean an end to the EU initiative begun by France last year to secure a "ceasefire" that would circumvent the 1989 edict, the sources say. The issue was discussed in Brussels last week at a session of the EU-Iran "critical deal".

In an attempt to head off a compromise, the International Rushdie Defence Committee denounced the plan, describing it as "a shocking and unacceptable position", which would undermine the moral authority of the EU.

Britain is certain to oppose the idea, which is backed by France, Spain and Italy. Foreign Office sources insist that Iran cannot be trusted, and argue that without the abrogation of the fatwa Mr Rushdie, who is still under police protection, can never be considered safe.

# Sarwar wins rerun of Glasgow contest

**Erlend Clouston**

A POTENTIAL parliamentary champion for the United Kingdom's 3 million Muslims emerged on Monday when Mohammad Sarwar, the cash-and-carry millionaire, captured the Labour nomination for the highly winnable seat of Glasgow Govan.

Mr Sarwar, a 43-year-old city councillor, easily defeated the Glasgow Central MP Mike Watson in the rerun ballot conducted amid unprecedented security.

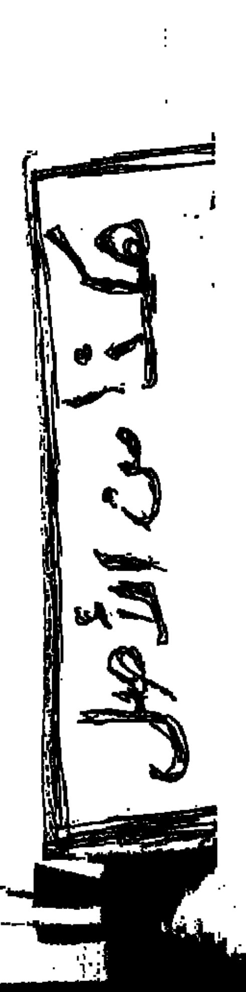
The winner's majority of 82 will have delighted party officials dreading a replay of last December's neck-and-neck ballot, which ended controversially in a one-vote victory for Mr Watson.

Mr Sarwar has attracted some criticism from diehards in a Scottish party unused to the idea of successful capitalists coming on side.

Mr Watson, whose constituency will be abolished at the next election, may have paid the price for last week's court bid to have 25 electors disqualified — conceived as a snub to the senior Labour personnel who had previously validated them. In a 93 per cent turnout, his support dropped from 245 to 197, while Mr Sarwar's rose 34 to 279.

Because of the allegations of forgery which forced Labour's national executive committee to scrap last December's ballot, voters this time had to queue for more than an hour while officials checked their identity.

The Scottish National Party has been watching the squabbling with undisguised glee, hoping the power struggle will have weakened Labour.



# British firms 'trade in terror'

**Maggie O'Kane**

THE British government is "trading in terror" by allowing the export of torture equipment, according to Amnesty International's annual report. Britain is one of only six countries — including China and Russia — which are "organising the export of military and security equipment to regimes that kill and torture their victims", the pressure group says.

Amnesty's investigator, James Wood, said he believes the Government is turning a blind eye to British companies trading in torture on the international market and specialising in human electric shock weapons.

Mr Wood claimed that British companies are playing a "significant part" in the supply of electric torture weapons to some 40 countries around the world. He alleged that five British companies have been engaged in the torture trade.

Electric prods are used to apply electric shocks to the genitals, ears, underarms and other sensitive parts of the body. They are carefully designed to inflict maximum pain without making the victim lose consciousness. In some countries the favoured method of torture is to insert the prod into the rectum.

In a letter in Amnesty's possession, one of the British companies, SDMS Security Products of Chelsea, west London, offered to supply 300 electric shock weapons to Zaire manufactured by its "associated company" in South Africa.

The letter reads: "I have spoken to the manufacturer and [have] pleasure in confirming that police and military authorities in the following countries have ordered the units over the past four years." It lists 30 countries to which electric shock weapons have been supplied.

According to Amnesty at least five of these 30 countries — Cyprus, Bulgaria, Venezuela, Mexico and Indonesia — are known to use electric shocks for torture.

Amnesty's report also criticises the British government for allowing armoured patrol vehicles to be supplied to the Indonesian government, which has a record of suppression in East Timor, and supplying rubber bullets and tear gas to the Nigerian government.

"The Government gives the impression that it is signing up to international human rights treaties, but when it comes to doing deals in torture equipment that act as sweeteners for military trade deals, they do what they want," Mr Wood said.

Amnesty says that no action has been taken against at least two British companies where electric shock weapons were seized early last year after an exposé by Channel 4's Dispatches programme.

Amnesty has also accused the Department of Trade and Industry of refusing to reveal what trading licences it has issued to British companies to allow them to get involved in the international supply of electric shock weapons.

As well as Britain, the Amnesty report names the United States, Germany, Russia, China and France. It concludes that "responsibility for human rights abuses does not lie only with those who pull the trigger or apply the electric shock ... it also lies with those who supply the weapons".

# £250,000 award for transsexual

**Clare Dyer**

A TRANSSEXUAL engineer who suffered serious injuries at work because her colleagues refused to work with her, has won a landmark sex discrimination ruling that could cost her employers £250,000.

The 29-year-old male to female transsexual, referred to as R, was injured in an accident after she was forced to work alone, and may never work again because of her injuries. She was off work for six months and then sacked because she was left with a permanent disability.

The decision, from London South industrial tribunal, is the first to follow a ruling in April from the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg that transsexuals are protected under a European Commission directive on equal treatment of men and women at work.

The ruling opened the way for the Sex Discrimination Act to be applied to transsexuals for the first time. The latest ruling is a warning to employers that they face large compensation claims if they sack transsexual employees or fail to stop co-workers harassing them.

The tribunal held that industrial tribunals can apply the Sex Discrimination Act to private sector employees without the need for Parliament to amend it — an area of uncertainty following the Luxembourg decision. Public sector employees are covered automatically by EC directives.

Madeleine Rees, R's solicitor, said her client was sexually harassed from the time she announced she was changing sex. Her workmates wrote "queer" and "poofter" on her jacket.

Ms Rees said R had tried to commit suicide after discovering that colleagues kept a book on her, offering £100 to whoever could cause her to resign or suffer serious injuries. Her employers denied the book existed. They are appealing against the decision.



A postal worker on picket duty outside a central London sorting office. The June 21 walkout was called in protest against Royal Mail's determination to introduce US-style 'team-working' PHOTO: MARTIN GODWIN

# RSPCA attacks hunters

**David Harrison**

THE RSPCA last week declared war on hunting lobbyists who are infiltrating the society in an attempt to weaken its opposition to blood sports.

The society voted overwhelmingly to reaffirm its anti-hunting policy, resist entryists' efforts to change the policy, and force all membership applicants to declare that they do not take part in activities that cause "avoidable suffering" to animals.

Nearly 3,000 members of the British Field Sports Society have joined the RSPCA in recent months. Members fear that if the trend continues the RSPCA will be swamped by pro-hunters.

The BFSS has 68,000 members — nearly three times as many as the RSPCA's 26,000 — and claims 37,500 affiliate members.

Richard Ryder, campaigns committee chairman, told the RSPCA annual meeting in London that strong action was needed to prevent entryists destroying the RSPCA as they came close to doing in the 1960s.

The society's resolutions have to be approved by the Charity Commission, which backs the right of BFSS members to join the RSPCA. Meanwhile the RSPCA plans to launch a recruitment drive and campaign to alert members about the infiltrators' threat. The resolutions were backed by nearly 500 members and opposed by only one or two, to cries of "Shame" and "Get out".

The BFSS's presence was small because it launched the infiltration drive in March and RSPCA members cannot vote at annual meetings until three months after joining. RSPCA members are worried that by next year the hunting lobby's presence will be much larger.

Peter Davies, RSPCA director-general, accused the hunting lobby of making "a last-ditch stance against the growing movement towards the abolition of hunting with hounds", which opinion polls show is opposed by 75 per cent of the public. — *The Observer*

# Victims to get a say in trials of criminals

**Alan Travis**

VICTIMS of some of the most serious crimes are to be exempted from a new scheme unveiled by the Home Secretary, Michael Howard, to ensure that the courts are aware of the full physical and emotional effects of the attacks they suffer.

The introduction of detailed "impact statements" is intended to give victims the opportunity formally to explain the effect of what happened to them so it can be taken into account by the police, the Crown Prosecution Service and the courts before they decide how to deal with the alleged criminal.

Year-long pilot schemes are to be launched in six police force areas in August to test the new scheme, which forms the centrepiece of a revised Victim's Charter published by the Government last week.

But the charity Victim Support criticised the package, saying it excluded the families of murder and manslaughter victims, those who have suffered persistent crimes such as stalking and racial harassment, as well as most victims of domestic violence.

It is believed the Home Office has blocked the extension of the scheme to these categories of crime because of questions over the quality of evidence demanded by the courts. Evidence provided by the families of murder victims would open up a new argument about whether the impact on those indirectly affected by a crime should also be taken into account.

"We are very concerned that some of the most vulnerable victims are being excluded from these plans to improve the information they receive and the opportunities to provide details about how crime has affected them. We believe no victim should be excluded," said Helen Reeves, director of Victim Support.

But David Maclean, the Home Office Minister, insisted the trials were valuable: "This is not going to give victims the right to change charges and the right to determine sentence. Victims don't want that and it would have grave dangers for the legal system," he said.

At present there was a danger the courts did not hear anything at all about the victim. "I trust the courts, the judges and the lawyers that if they hear a proper balanced, fair account of the impact on the victim, they will then take that into account and give it proper weight," Mr Maclean said.

Among the other measures in the revised charter are a one-stop shop so that every victim of a crime "who opts in" will be told by the police if someone is caught, cautioned or charged and if there is any other significant development in the case. The Probation Service will also tell a victim when someone sentenced to life imprisonment, or someone who has committed a serious sexual or violent crime, is to be released.

● David Faulkner, Whitehall's chief architect of criminal justice policy in the early 1990s, warned that more severe sentences and harsher prison regimes will increase crime and not cut it. He says Parliament should enact a criminal code which recognises that changes in the treatment of offenders can only have a marginal effect on the level of crime.

# Recession and watchdogs take heavy toll of salesmen

**Dan Atkinson**

MORE than 145,000 sales representatives have left the life assurance and pensions industry since the boom years of the late 1980s and early 1990s. The exodus has been caused partly by a crackdown on cowboy operators and partly by the economic slump.

At the turn of the decade, an army of about 220,000 was engaged in selling packaged financial products, including assurance, unit trusts, savings plans and pensions.

This did not include about 12,000 brokers selling standard motor and household-type insurance or the numbers who had started to sell insurance products on behalf of banks. "Bancassurance" did not become fashionable until the early 1990s, when the high street banks took on thousands of people to sell everything from pensions to house insurance.

But even before the industry's ranks were swollen by such people, there were more investment salesmen than postmen. At one for every 120 households they enjoyed a higher ratio to members of the public than GPs.

Now the total of salesmen tied to a particular company is closer to 93,000, a drop of more than half. A series of scandals culminating in the pensions mis-selling fiasco that came to light in the early 1990s contributed to the culling of salesmen.

Eighteen months ago the City regulators ordered all financial companies to review cases where people had been persuaded to switch from their employer's pension to a private pension, following evidence that many had been wrongly advised.

Combined with tougher rules for the training and competence of sales staff, such action by financial watchdogs has prompted many thousands to leave the industry.

Where previously salesmen were sent out "on the road" to sell insurance after one day's training, firms are now required to carry out rigorous tests on their employees before allowing them anywhere near the public.




## In Brief

FOR THE first time, more men than women complained about finding doors closed to them when they went looking for work last year, the annual report for the Equal Opportunities Commission revealed. But the doors men were pushing against were often those they would have shunned in the past. Men in their 50s, made redundant from male-dominated industries like shipbuilding and construction, are pursuing the low-paid, part-time jobs that used to be left to women.

AFTER months of uncertainty, Britain's millennium celebration is back on course after the Heritage Secretary, Virginia Bottomley, announced that the £500 million project at Greenwich would go ahead.

THE jailing for six months of a diabetic driver who killed another motorist when he blacked out because of a sudden drop in his sugar level has raised fundamental legal and moral issues affecting more than 300,000 insulin-dependent drivers.

THE Archbishop of Canterbury is to visit the Pope in December. It will be seen as a significant attempt to conciliate the Anglo-Catholic wing of the Church of England, demoralised by the decision to ordain women and weakened by high profile converts to the Roman Catholic Church.

THE London School of Economics is to introduce top-up fees for students in a decisive step towards ending free degrees and creating an Ivy League of élite universities.

JOHN PEARN, pilot of the oil tanker Sea Empress which ran aground at Milford Haven in February, was demoted after an inquiry found him guilty of incompetence. Mr Pearn was licensed to pilot ships up to 150,000 tonnes, but this has been reduced to 90,000 tonnes.

THE POLICE Federation is calling for a ban on pistols. The call, in the midst of the Dunblane massacre inquiry, is the most significant pressure so far on the Government for a ban.

AMANDA FLEWITT, who was given a hospital abortion without her consent, won damages thought to be around £10,000. Her lawyers reached an out-of-court settlement with North Nottinghamshire health authority, which runs King's Mill Hospital. The hospital is being sued by two other women.

THE FULL opening of the British Library is to be delayed by yet another year as well as costing the taxpayer an extra £15 million. The opening of the final reading room has been put back from March 1998 to June 1999. The entire library, at St Pancras, central London, should have been opened in 1993.

Gerard Kelly, convicted IRA bomber, Maze prison escapee and Sinn Fein Northern Ireland Forum representative, escaped from police after being arrested during clashes at a loyalist parade in Belfast last week. He was let out of a police car to speak to RUC officers, and, still handcuffed, made off through the crowds PHOTOGRAPH: ALAN LEWIS

# Three charged after raid on bomb factory in Ireland

**David Sharrock**

THREE men were charged in Dublin last week in connection with the discovery of what is believed to be a large IRA bomb factory.

A second search of the farm at Clonaslee, Co Laoise, where the complex was found, also uncovered a "sizeable" underground bunker and a quantity of bomb-making equipment.

The three are accused of possessing Semtex-filled mortar bombs with intent to endanger life.

It prompted the Irish prime minister, John Bruton, to say that Sinn Fein should make a "life-or-death" break with the IRA.

Six of the men were arrested at the farm near the Offaly border in the Irish Republic. Two of the men are IRA veterans — one of them a bomb-maker, and the other held previously for the Eksund gun-running bid from Libya. A seventh man was arrested later.

The arrests followed two days of surveillance. A Garda source said they had caught an IRA "engineering team" assembling a bomb.

One man at the scene challenged the police with a handgun but was quickly overpowered. Semtex and home-made explosive were recovered along with timing devices.

Mr Bruton said the arrests once more called into question the commitment of Sinn Fein and the IRA to peace. "I understand that they were actually in the process of manufacturing arms at the time of the find. Now that runs completely counter to the acceptance by Sinn Fein, for example, of the Mitchell principles, one of which is that there should be no threat of force as part of all-party negotiations. How one can reconcile not threatening force with manufacturing bombs I don't know."

Earlier in the week, the IRA had strongly signalled that it is looking for a way out of a return to violence when it admitted with "sincere regret" that it was responsible for the Manchester bomb and said it was still prepared to call a ceasefire and was "still prepared to enhance the democratic peace process".

The statement followed assessments by senior security sources in Northern Ireland that the IRA is "desperate" to find a way back towards calling a ceasefire.

# US to deport fugitive to UK

THE US Supreme Court cleared the way on Monday for an Irish nationalist fugitive who escaped 13 years ago from a Northern Ireland prison to be extradited to Britain.

The nation's highest court denied Jimmy Smyth's appeal of a lower court's ruling permitting his extradition.

Smyth's attorney, Karen Snell, said she would ask a federal judge in San Francisco to block Smyth's extradition on the grounds that it would violate an international convention against torture.

Attorneys for Smyth had argued that he would suffer political persecution based on his religious beliefs and political opinions if sent back to Britain. But the justices denied the appeal without any comment or dissent.

Smyth was convicted in 1978 of the attempted murder of an off-duty prison guard in Belfast. He was sentenced to 20 years in prison, but in 1983 he broke out of Northern Ireland's Maze prison. He went to San Francisco, where he was arrested in 1992. — *Reuter*



# Health service 'needs an extra £6 billion'

**Chris Mihill and David Brindle**

THE CASE of a 72-year-old woman who suffered mental anguish while being made to wait 10 weeks for breast cancer surgery was an example of the dangerous cuts in the National Health Service, the British Medical Association was told on Monday.

At its annual conference in Brighton, the BMA called for an extra £6 billion to be put into the health service and for an end to annual 3 per cent "efficiency savings", which doctors described as a euphemism for cuts.

Sandy Macara, the chairman said: "We cannot go on meeting each succeeding crisis with quick-fix expedients which merely displace the pain and strain elsewhere. This process has been described as shuffling the deck-chairs on the Titanic. We need to change the course of our ship of state into more constantly charted waters if it is not to suffer the same fate."

The doctors warned of insufficient beds, especially in intensive care units, and said staffing levels for doctors and nurses were near to putting patients' safety at risk.

Dr Macara said the UK should increase its total health expenditure from about 7 per cent of gross domestic product to 8 per cent in line with most continental countries. That would produce an extra £6 billion.

The NHS was facing real annual cuts as most of the extra money allocated by the Government was spent on extra managers or clawed back by the 3 per cent efficiency savings.

Dr Macara said the Government asserted that there had been an increase in funding in the three financial years 1993/94, 1994/95 and 1995/96 of 0.5 per cent, 1.8 per cent and 1.1 per cent. After efficiency savings the real funding over the three years was minus 1.5 per cent, minus 0.5 per cent and minus 1.9 per cent.

"We have called for change: change to restore the ethic of a care-driven service in place of the cash-ridden business whose alien philosophy and ungovernable practices have brought us to the brink of disaster."

The Department of Health said spending was at an all-time high at £42.6 billion in 1996/97. "Last year the NHS received a real-term increase of £500 million. It is an expanding service treating more and more patients."

Stephen Dorrell, the Health Secretary, conceded that the NHS was under pressure but said funding had increased continuously since 1979.

Health managers scorned Mr Macara's "unrealistic" demand and warned that his outspoken comments would frighten people and devalue proper debate.

"An additional £6 billion is the cost of the police force in this country. Is Dr Macara suggesting we take the bobbies off the beat and give them all a stethoscope?" asked Karen Caines, director of the Institute of Health Services Management.

# Girls held in Italy 'duped' into smuggling heroin

**Owen Bowcott**

TWO teenage British girls held in Italian prisons on drugs-smuggling charges this week denied knowing that the luggage they were carrying contained around $1 million worth of pure heroin.

Melanie Jackman, aged 19, and Marianne Platt, aged 16, both from Brighton, were kept under surveillance by Italian police after flying into Rome's Fiumicino airport from Turkey earlier this month.

The two friends face charges of possessing and importing 4kg of the refined drug after being arrested in the company of a Nigerian couple in the small town of Aversa, 20km outside Rome. The Nigerians had travelled on the same flight from Istanbul.

The British vice-consul in Naples, Michael Burgoyne, has seen both girls, who are being held in different prisons, several times since they were detained on June 7.

Melanie is in a women's prison in Arienzo, near Caserta, along with the Nigerian woman who was arrested with her. Marianne has been moved from a juvenile detention centre in Nisida, near Naples, to a similar institution in Rome.

Mr Burgoyne said: "Physically they are fine, but obviously being arrested was a traumatic experience for them. They have told me that they did not know that the luggage they were carrying contained drugs."

Ms Jackman's father has also flown out to visit her. Ms Platt's mother is expected to visit her shortly. It may be several weeks before either girl is given an opportunity to apply for bail. Neither speaks Italian. Each girl is allowed one telephone call a week.

Marianne's mother, Jackie King, 36, said she was shocked to discover that her daughter was in Italy. She had believed the two girls were on holiday in Greece, where Melanie was going to work as a nanny for a holidaying couple.

Marianne, who has 12 GCSEs, was an innocent dupe, she insisted.

The Italian police believe the girls were working for a Nigeria-based trafficking syndicate.

A spokesman said: "We want to know why two young, fresh-faced and politely-mannered Britons were in possession of such a large amount of heroin."

Last month Italian authorities arrested 14 Naples-based US Navy sailors who had allegedly been recruited by Nigerian drug dealers to bring in heroin from Turkey.

Ms Jackman could face up to five years in prison, although any sentence may be less if she co-operates with investigators. Marianne Platt could escape jail because of her age. Until last summer she was a pupil at the School of Performing Arts and Technology College in Selhurst, southeast London, and had been chosen to show John Major around when he visited the school two years ago.

# If the truth be told

**Eric Hobsbawm** speaks the unspeakable to a Labour party leadership that has lost the love of its leftwing intellectuals

A WIDE gap now separates the politicians of the British Labour party from the intellectuals of the left, whose general reaction to Tony Blair's campaign is to stuff their ears and grit their teeth as they hope for a Labour victory.

The party, in turn, is slightly disquieted by their absence from the battlefield, if only because people with, or studying for, non-MBA degrees, who might be expected to be Labour voters, today form a substantial slice of the electorate. Still, it is targeting another electorate, the disappointed middle-class Tories.

The gap is not due to any basic disagreement about the party's political stance. Except for a few palaeolithic sectarian survivals, everyone agrees that the future of the European left lies in centre-left governments finding a viable mix of private and public interests. If anything, left intellectuals are keener on an alliance, perhaps a coalition, with the Liberal Democrats which would demonstrate the permanent minority status of the Tories, for it was a minority even in the Thatcher era.

A remarkable new work of comparative historical analysis, which will soon establish itself as a classic, Donald Sassoon's lucid and erudite One Hundred Years Of Socialism, demonstrates that this has always been the basis of the success of the effective parties of the left, whether social democratic or (in a few cases such as France and Italy) communist. In practice they have served to regulate and socialise the wealth-creating and directionless economic dynamism of capitalism, not to replace it.

Capitalism, in turn, can exist only "if it is structured, organised, shaped, justified, legitimised, and hence restrained by the interplay of different ideologies". In coexistence with West European socialism (and some other anti-Hayekian ideologies) it became civilised for a while: less hierarchical than in the Far East, less ruthlessly individualist than in the US. Whether or not "the idea of socialism will weather the great chaos at the end of this millennium" we cannot yet know. But it seems clear that "the fate and probably the future of West European socialism cannot be separated from that of European capitalism".

What separates Labour's intellectuals from its political operators, who would probably agree in private with Sassoon's book, if they found time to read it, is the sheer amount of self-censorship and non-truth-telling which is imposed on any party believed capable of winning a general election. But refusing to say the electorally inconvenient, which is just a step away from refusing to think the electorally inconvenient, cannot be an adequate guide for taking charge of the destinies of a country.

If only in the interests of the party, Labour's intellectuals cannot so gag themselves. As Will Hutton says, plaintively, someone has to "make the case for redistributive taxation to achieve public purpose and relieve the growth of poverty", as the Lib Dems do, and, with luck, if there is a coalition government after the next election, "at least one part will have won a mandate for higher taxation and a more activist approach to economic management".

Someone has to say that "the unleashing of market forces as a solution to mass unemployment" is today "a monument to human folly" (Sassoon, page 456). Maximum growth, as David Marquand reminds us, is not maximum wellbeing. When the Emperor is naked, someone has to say so. The problem facing labour is twofold. First, it faces a genuine difficulty, insofar as the globalisation of the world economy has undermined the power of national governments, and especially of social democratic governments, to ensure their citizens' welfare. No doubt the current economic orthodoxy underestimates the potential of nation states, economic blocs and global institutions armed with current technology, jointly or singly to establish some control over the transnational economy. No doubt policies less committed to the global free market (except, of course, for poor people migrating in search of jobs) would help.




Still, under present circumstances the policies which worked so well in the golden mid-century decades of cohabitation between regulated capitalism and social democracy broke down and cannot be restored. In a lucid chapter on "neo-revisionism", Sassoon shows how this has pushed all left parties from Finland in the north to D'Alema's Italian ex-communists in the south in the same direction as Tony Blair, with more or less reluctance. What is worse, he holds, probably correctly, that the European Union's essentially neo-liberal Maastricht principle, which sees the fight against inflation as the primary task of government, has tied their hands even more tightly.

It is therefore undeniable that the left must fall back on pragmatic policies. It has no obvious and specific agenda. But the problem of finding new solutions is obfuscated by two decades and four elections that have knocked the intellectual stuffing and the political confidence out of most of the left. For the first time in memory a Labour election campaign is run not on the principle of offering the British people an alternative to the Government — a disastrous and visibly bankrupt regime, as it happens — but behind the defensive ramparts of the slogan: "We are not what the Tories say we are."

This will, one hopes, be a way of avoiding a fifth election defeat, but it is no way to prepare a Labour government which must either fail the country or do things which its leaders dare not admit in public before the election. Someone has to talk about the publicly unspeakable, otherwise we shall really talk ourselves into the belief that states must abdicate before the market, or that a country considerably richer than in 1970 cannot afford what it offered to its pensioners 25 years ago.

Someone must look at the problems we face without immediately thinking of tomorrow's polls. In short, in political situations which dare not speak their name, there is a role for non-elected and disavowable, if troublesome, Labour intellectuals who can and must.

They may even have something to contribute to politics as understood by the operators. For another gap, perhaps measured by the uncertainties of opinion polls, today separates politicians and those for whom they claim to speak.

Parties which confidently look forward to victory in the next general election fail to make it (Spain, the Czech Republic, Israel). Parties resigned to defeat are pleasantly surprised by the unexpected strength of their support (France).

Today the semi-detached but loyal intellectuals of the left are more keenly aware than official party spokesmen that "people and politicians have parted company". Our "tense, mistrustful, anxiety-haunted society" (David Marquand) finds no adequate political expression. That is why so many of us cannot get rid of the fear that, whatever polls and probability, we could just lose. The enormous negative rating of the Government is not matched by a corresponding positive enthusiasm for the Opposition. The large space between minus and plus contains the parts which at present none of the political brewers' beers reach.

They may be the vital parts.

One Hundred Years Of Socialism: The West European Left In The Twentieth Century, by Donald Sassoon (IB Tauris, £35).
Eric Hobsbawm's own books include Age Of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century, 1914-91 (Michael Joseph)



# At the court of the Russian kingmaker

Norman Stone

WITH the rise of General Lebed, the Russian Revolution has revealed its true colours: it has not been a 1789 at all, with barricades bestridden and New Dawns proclaimed. Rather, it is an 1848, an altogether different business, in which the old order was speedily revived, in a far more intelligent and flexible way. It was, by 1849, the liberals who looked foolish, and not the reactionaries.

After the first round of the Russian election, we can see that the West's one-time hero, Gregor Yavlinsky, is going nowhere. Time was when he, scanning a Moscow full of United Colors and the like, could smugly say that capitalism and democracy had swept all before them. Not now. For the 1849 of Russia is shown in the rise of his counterpart, Alexander Lebed.

This election can only really be a battle for the Yeltsin succession: it has been remarkable to see Boris so steady on his pins, but would anyone take much of a bet on his physical survival? In these stakes, Lebed is a formidable fellow — young, a body-builder, a non-drinker. He also has experience of Russia where it counts — over nationality policy.

In the old Soviet army, the men at the top were tired, and sometimes bone-headed. Lebed is another matter. In the first place, he knows a great deal about Russian politics: he was used, in the later years of Gorbachev, to put down revolts by the non-Russian peoples. His unit was repeatedly in action: in April 1989 in Tbilisi (where, by some accounts, soldiers on a high attacked demonstrating civilians with sharpened spades), and again in January 1991 in Vilnius, In the history of the Soviet Union, nationality policy was all-important — it was in this that Stalin made his reputation, even before 1917 — and it was communism's duty to ride the nationalist tiger. That meant much cunning and learning.

General Lebed acquired such things. You had to learn elements of Leninism, ie, techniques of power, and to know when people should be brow-beaten, and when they should be bought, and when they should be divided. Lebed's career as a political general, in these respects, was illustrative: over Vilnius, he clubbed down the nationalists, and publicly said that Gorbachev was refusing to admit in public that it was he who had really given the orders. Then, in 1992, Lebed's 14 Army took up station in Tiraspol, where another nationality row developed — this time, over the independence of "Moldova", most of which is a former province of Romania. Alleging a danger of Romanian irredentism, Lebed upheld the rights of the Russian and Ukrainian population of the area. In effect, Lebed enforced partition, at a cost of some 800 lives. But he is nobody's fool.

Dominating Moldova as he did, he managed to persuade Western foreign offices that he was just even-handedly keeping the show on the road (there was in fact almost no evidence of Romanian irredentism). He could reinforce his alleged neutrality by standing in politics, already in December 1993, as an ecological candidate. Lebed continually impresses Western visitors, because he is tough, and he knows how to play upon Westerners' fears that some tinpot secessionist movement will upset our cosy post-cold-war arrangements.

Outside Catherine the Great's fortress in Moldova, he said that at least Suvorov, his predecessor in these Marches of the Russian Empire, had had a Catherine behind him, and at least Zhukov, the architect of victory in 1945, had had a Stalin. But what did he, Lebed, have? Towards Gorbachev and Yeltsin he could only direct contemptuous reproaches: they were feeble, whereas keeping Russia together required strength. He has that in abundance. And now we shall probably see him making the running in politics.

The sources of his strength are obvious enough: the "efficient part" of the demoralised soldiers. The armed forces may not wish to take power — how could they? Running their own show has been impossible, and the long Chechen episode was absurdly to its discredit. Lebed knows, and publicly said, that the Chechen affair should never have been tackled as it was. He would have proceeded by clever politics, using force only when necessary, and doing so only by proxy — in the Caucasus, not difficult to do.

Where he stands on economic matters is not quite clear: no doubt he would "modernise" through quasi-monopolies, the corruption of which he would try to control by harsh methods.

If Boris Yeltsin wins by a narrow margin, and is then physically incapacitated, then it seems that General Lebed is on our menu as the next course. And the nationalities of Russia, and the ex-Soviet Union, will be, one after another, the next courses on his.

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# Arm twisting at the United Nations

THE APPOINTMENT of the United Nations secretary-general has always been a secretive and undemocratic affair. The justification for allowing the "permanent five" to exercise a veto was that, otherwise, no consensus would be reached between the rival blocs. In the post-cold war age, this should be high on the list of needed reforms. Yet even under the existing rules Washington's announcement that it will veto Boutros Boutros-Ghali if he stands for re-election is arrogant and improper. It pre-empts a process of informal discussion and canvassing of names which in the past has taken several months.

Washington, United States officials say, has been "calling around to foreign leaders" in recent weeks to try to enlist them in its blocking campaign. Now Bill Clinton has chosen to twist the arms of his allies in the most public way — no wonder that France is furious and Britain is pained. Mr Boutros-Ghali had a perfect right to announce his intention of standing again, though he probably only did so to get his word in before the White House. There is a general assumption that the incumbent will run again and every previous secretary-general has indicated his intentions in advance. (His not hers: the male domination of this job is another subject for reform.) For the world's only superpower to assert its right to dictate so openly is imprudent too: these matters are usually dealt with more discreetly. It is the biggest gesture of contempt for the secretary-general's position since Nikita Khrushchev demanded in 1961 that the post be replaced by a "troika".

Mr Boutros-Ghali has not been a brilliant secretary-general and several better candidates have already been mentioned (although they have been prudently ruling themselves out from a contest that has been soured before it begins). But the criticisms levelled against him by the US address the wrong targets. Efforts have been made to tackle UN bureaucracy and over-spending: the latter charge comes oddly from a country that has owed vast sums. The alleged "failure" of the UN in Somalia and Bosnia has more to do with the actions and omissions of the principal member-states than with the secretary-general. In Somalia it was the US that insisted, for a time, in running the show disastrously under a UN flag. In Bosnia the UN peace-keepers were starved of funds and manpower to carry out an unrealistic mandate imposed on them by the Security Council. There is also a strong suspicion that if Mr Boutros-Ghali spoke better English, and if the Republican challenger Bob Dole did not get easy laughs out of mispronouncing his name, then Mr Clinton might have kept quiet and let the selection proceed through the usual channels.

The secretary-general has suffered most of all — and the UN even more so — by the general downgrading of its reputation and role since the beginning of this decade. Western opinion has swung from extravagant hope to dismissive contempt — both equally unjustified. Four years ago the then Foreign Secretary, Douglas Hurd, welcomed Mr Boutros-Ghali's appointment in the Guardian with warm words. Britain would support him in "using the Charter as the international community's principal tool of preventive diplomacy". Who mentions the Charter now, far less discusses the important proposals put forward by Mr Boutros-Ghali (and many others) to give the Charter more teeth or just to implement what it already sets out? One such reform would tackle the veto, including its use in this case. That is not going to change now, but the General Assembly — which still has the right to reject a candidate — should insist on being properly consulted and on making the final choice.

# Lies, statistics and dam lies

THE BIG dammers have suffered a rare setback in Malaysia, where the massive Bakun project — vehemently backed by the prime minister, Mahathir Mohamad — has been blocked in the high court. The government had sought to bypass environmental regulations by transferring the project from federal jurisdiction to the state of Sarawak, where the chief minister is another ardent supporter. Now the Malaysian high court has found in favour of three tribal residents whose views were not heard, ruling that Sarawak's environmental assessment should not have been kept secret.

The Bakun project will stem the Rajang river in Sarawak with a 200-metre high dam, generating 2,400 megawatts of power, of which more than half will be transmitted via undersea cables to peninsular Malaysia. It will flood an area the size of Singapore, force several thousand tribal residents to be relocated, and destroy a significant area of rainforest. It raises familiar issues, which have surrounded a series of big dam projects from Aswan onwards: the difference between then and now is that we know much more about what can go amiss.

Its promoters ask what can possibly be wrong with promoting "clean" power generation and lessening reliance on fossil fuels. (That was the argument too for the Pergau dam, several times smaller than Bakun but also vulnerable on environmental grounds.) Experience shows that big dams are particularly prone to silitation which limits their life — in this case, perhaps, to no more than 50 years — and there is also a risk of seismic shock. The effects of high-volume discharge downstream can be devastating. There is likely to be a significant power loss over long transmission lines — those proposed here would be the longest in the world.

Harder to measure is the damage to untouched habitat and the quality of life of indigenous people whose voices would remain unheard if their cause had not been adopted by campaigning bodies such as Friends of the Earth. The plan is to resettle them into plantations where they will shift from subsistence farming to grow cash crops. Yet they are the people who have not been consulted and who do not wish to go.

When the BBC criticised the Bakun dam project in a documentary last year, Dr Mahathir said that the corporation was "congenitally incapable of telling the truth". His own view on the truth of this matter has been subject to revision. The project was shelved for a while in 1990 — Dr Mahathir said that this was "proof that Malaysia cared about the environment". Now, however, he appears to care more about grandiose claims to turn Malaysia into southeast Asia's industrial powerhouse by 2020. There is a solution — and it was contemplated officially in 1990. That is to build a number of smaller dams in a stepped system, which will be safer and cheaper. Monster dams have more political sex appeal but they may also have monstrous results.

# Let them eat goose

LET THE LONG contention cease, wrote Matthew Arnold. Geese are swans, and swans are geese. But not in Clarkstown, New York State, whose citizens have been driven to desperation by a plague of Canada geese who "snap at picnickers" and deposit half a pound of droppings per bird per day. There may be nothing finer than a flight of Canada geese in V-formation but these ones remain on land, turning ball parks into no-play areas. Ever since Alfred Hitchcock, the United States has had mixed feelings about birds. Tom Lehrer advocated poisoning pigeons in the park. The third world war was once nearly started by a flock of Canada geese translated by radar into a flight of Soviet missiles.

The real threat remains not an excess of birds but the many risks to their survival. In March 10 countries signed the Brisbane Initiative, which seeks to protect the great flyway from the Arctic Circle down to southern New Zealand. In Europe, however, the World Wildlife Fund reports that only France, Spain, Britain and Sweden have begun to implement European Union habitat-protection measures for migratory birds.

None of this is likely to move the people of Clarkstown. Previous efforts to budge resident populations of Canada geese in North America have been singularly unsuccessful. A few truckloads of them were once removed from a Long Island golf course and driven to Maine. They were back on the fairway before the trucks got home. Clarkstown has now found a solution — but it raises more questions than it answers. The birds are shipped to a processing plant, ground up and sent back in frozen packages — to be distributed to the poor. As a comment on our times this offers several layers for deconstruction, and it goes a good deal deeper than the mess which it seeks to avoid.



# Old habits die hard in the Deep South

Martin Woollacott

HISTORY is, by definition, unfinished, but quite how unfinished has been one of the rediscoveries of the last few years. Seemingly fundamental changes take place, yet these revolutions, in retrospect, come to be seen as mere rearrangements of stubborn problems.

In the Middle East, in Europe, in Russia, we are reminded of the way in which these problems do not go away, emerging, as each breaker withdraws from the shore, far less altered than we believed possible. In the United States, the racial problem is such a survivor. It has changed, but has it changed that much? Its solution, as Gunnar Myrdal argued in An American Dilemma, is still of worldwide importance.

In 1944, when Myrdal wrote, progress on race was to do with winning the allegiance of non-white populations across the globe and thus helping to win the war. It concerned, of course, the redress of a massive injustice, but it was also about whether Americans could grasp a whole version of their own history, rather than a racially partial one. Beyond that, it was a critical test of whether social engineering, guided by a social science whose goal was to find the "practical foundation for a never ending reconstruction of society", could reshape the affairs of man.

As President Clinton confers with Southern governors over the burning of black churches, it is apparent how far we have come from the Swedish scholar's belief in willed social change. This is not because the burnings represent a regression to racism in the South. They are, in themselves, an ambiguous phenomenon embracing everything from insurance fraud to pyromania. What is politically motivated belongs, probably, with the hooligan extremism on the fringes in all Western societies. But they do draw attention to the confusion that exists in the place where an American racial policy ought to be, and to the lightly coded, ruthless competition between the major parties on racial matters.

The Republicans strive to imply that the Democrats are the creators, subsidisers, and appeasers of a criminalised, welfare-dependent black society in the inner cities of the United States. This crudity coexists with a more sophisticated and humane understanding of the inner city and race problems in both parties and among the population at large. But, in campaign, the one swamps the other. This is the message that links all the ostensibly non-racial issues like welfare, big government, the death penalty, and family values together.

While related debates go on in countries that have smaller or no racial minorities, in the US race is the knot that ties the package up. The ignoble strategy of the Democrats under Clinton, critics say, has been to mimic the Republican message, in a slightly more moderate form, while trying to hang on to black votes.

With the faltering of affirmative action and the partial retreat from multi-culturalism, the suspicion arises that there is in the US no longer a plan on race, no longer a vision of how the gap will be bridged. Whatever the defects of those approaches, they did constitute a plan of sorts. Race, instead, is being used as the weapon of choice in the battle between the two parties. Tom Wicker argues in his new book, Tragic Failure, that race has been the key issue in every election since 1968, producing a quarter century of Republican ascendancy broken only by Carter's single term. Clinton's narrow success in 1992, in such a view, depended on his recognition that most whites did not want to pay any serious economic price for racial integration, which is why he promised to end "welfare as we know it".

The impact of such politics is not confined to whites. The black middle class is one of the success stories of integration, but, as it has grown, the black underclass has grown even faster. Martin Luther King "did not die so that half of us could 'make it' and half perish", the African-American scholars Henry Louis Gates, Jr, and Cornel West, write in another new book, The Future Of The Race. Middle-class blacks are faced with an especially sharp version of a question that is especially American. That question is whether or not you can walk away from the mess of existing history, with its painful demands for sacrifice and compromise, to create a less troublesome reality elsewhere.

THERE IS a larger, admittedly speculative, way in which the unfinished nature of history can be said to affect US politics today. The South that will soon host the Olympics may be largely reconstructed, but the issues that split the US at the time of the Civil War live on in both black and white consciousness, and in all regions of America. A kind of "Southernism" may be sketched, which not only may sustain the idea of racial hierarchy, but which continues the passionate and contradictory resistance to modernisation which was also part of the Southern rebellion.

Professor James McPherson, the distinguished historian of the Civil War, in a recent collection of essays, quotes from an 1855 article in a Richmond journal on the education of youth. Southerners should be educated in establishments, the article said, "where their training would be moral, religious, and conservative, and they would never learn, or read a word in school or out of school, inconsistent with orthodox Christianity, pure morality, the right of property, and sacredness of marriage". That could have been written today by any member of the Religious Right, by some members of both major parties; and, in only slightly amended form, by representatives of the Nation of Islam.

The broader theme of secession as a "solution" to difficult political problems, as a retreat from compromise, finds expression both in suburban white escape from the cities and in black separatism. That blacks should be the inheritors of the Southern tradition of secession as much as whites is ironic proof that the US is one culture. It is a culture in which secession is as much a central strand, as much the temptation that ought to be resisted, as it was in the Civil War period, and the stakes are just as high.

# The return of the feudal barons

**Larry Elliot** warns that rising economic inequality may plunge the West into a new Dark Age




PUBLISHERS simply adore the millennium. Barely a week goes by without the appearance on the shelves of a new tome chock-full of Nostradamus-style insights into what life will be like in the 21st century.

We would probably be ready for a vision, whatever the date. After the dry monetarist preaching of the eighties, the nineties are awash with uncertainty and anxiety. Truly, this is the Age of Insecurity, and that jars with everything we have been led to believe.

The modern West has been built on the idea of progress. For the past two centuries, each generation has taken it for granted that technology will become more sophisticated and that living standards will rise.

As far as the leaders of the West are concerned, this still holds true. When the Group of Seven (G7) nations ends its summit in Lyon this weekend, its communiqué will stress that the future looks bright provided everybody co-operates to fight inflation, curb fiscal deficits, combat terrorism, support the multilateral trading system, ease developing countries' debt and stamp out organised crime, corruption and drug-trafficking.

The problem for G7 is the growing disparity between what it says is going on in the world economy and conditions on the ground. At the top, life is sweet. Communism's collapse has meant rich pickings for an élite few, but at the expense of an explosion in inequality.

Some economists see this as an inevitable phase of capitalism. A book by Graeme Snooks*, professor of economic history at the Australian National University in Canberra, argues that the world is shaped by what he calls dynamic materialism.

Snooks sees history as the survival of the fittest, in which "mankind struggles against other species and its own kind for scarce natural resources in order to survive and prosper".

As a case study, he points to Australia in the late 18th century, when the closed Aboriginal culture came up against a model of Western development (Britain) battle-scarred from constant struggle with other European nation states.

It was no contest. Aboriginal Australia was not backward or poverty stricken. It was a society built on order and consensus, in which a comfortable lifestyle was made possible with a combination of traditional technology and population control to husband resources. But as soon as this closed society's isolation ended its collapse was inevitable.

Human nature is unchanging, so any attempt to eliminate materialist man's primal urges could only be achieved through a global dictatorship which in the end would push man away from growth through technology to growth through the only other available option — war.

One of the problems with this argument, as the book acknowledges, is that progress is neither seamless nor trouble-free. Ultimately, the collapse of the Roman Empire paved the way for the cultural, political and technological changes necessary for the emergence of the modern industrialised West. But the key word is "ultimately". It took 1,000 years and the Dark Ages to do it.

This recognition — that society could step over the brink into an abyss of chaos — has started to alarm economists and political thinkers. The concern is being expressed most forcibly in America, where the signs of dislocation, dysfunction and possible collapse are much more obvious.

Lester Thurow, in his millennium offering, The Future Of Capitalism, makes the point that many successful societies existed with inequality — Ancient Rome, the Incas, classical China — but all had political systems that worked with the grain of the economic framework.

Inequality worked fine alongside slavery, but once you added democracy to the equation things became combustible. Democracy and inequality simply don't mix.

For the best part of two centuries this was recognised, by those on the right as well as the left. Indeed, some of the more progressive social measures were introduced by liberal patricians such as Roosevelt, Disraeli and Bismarck, who could see the argument for giving everybody a stake in the capitalist system.

As Thurow puts it, the role of government in the modern West has been primarily to reduce inequality.

NOW HE sees a different possibility — that the West may be on the brink of plunging into a new Dark Age. There are many parallels — the collapse of the public realm and the retreat into privacy. More is spent on private than public policing in America, which is hardly surprising given that 28 million people there now live in walled, gated and guarded communities.

During the fall of the Roman Empire, decline fed upon itself, because once the economy stopped growing there was no longer the money to maintain the infrastructure. The rich didn't want to pay taxes, so social investment fell.

Eventually living standards fell, work became harder and less productive and there was more overcrowding. Where the sophisticated Roman systems of roads, water and sewage were allowed to decay, so investment in America's public infrastructure has halved in the past 20 years. In the Middle Ages, people lived in constant fear of crime, youth gangs and muggings.

You don't have to buy the full Thurow thesis to recognise that there might be something in it. The case remains compelling for using the tax system to reduce income inequality, for the public realm to be built up, for controls on the global capital markets.

So why is this not being shouted from the rooftops? A good starting point is to ask who exactly supports the current configuration of policy. Who thinks there is nothing wrong with income inequality being greater than at any time since records began? Who is arguing that attempts by the state to smooth out inequality must by definition be bad, that the private sector is to be preferred to the public sector, that low taxation is vital to increase the incentives of wealth creators?

The answer is, of course, the new class of feudal barons — the rich and powerful who live in their walled fortresses, protected by retainers, who avoid paying taxes whenever they can, and demand that the government keep the peasants in check with an increasingly draconian criminal justice system.

These people find it hard to understand the popularity of Pat Buchanan. They should flick through a history book and find its causes — before it's too late.

*The Dynamic Society, Routledge, £60 (£16.99 paperback)

## Too few gain from the ending of apartheid

**Richard Thomas**

TWO young men debate the challenges of government in the 1990s. "Things are not as easy once you are actually in power," says one. The second agrees: "It is a question of what is achievable, what your priorities are, where sacrifices will fall. Tough choices have to be made."

Harvard Business School students? In fact, the speakers are Jabulani Moleketti and Pule Makgoe, high-flyers in the South African government's civil service.

These are the winners in the new South Africa, black high-achievers who have muscled in on the rewards previously guarded by the white minority.

As civil servants, they are well paid. Next month their pay packets will swell again, despite the government's fiscal austerity.

When apartheid was swept away it was one of the most unequal countries in the world. The gap between rich and poor is, however, the same today as it was in 1980.

But the racial dimension to the rich/poor divide has altered. While inter-racial inequality has diminished sharply, intra-racial inequality, particularly within the black population, has soared.

The gap between races is still huge. An International Labour Office (ILO) report on the South African labour market says the white minority scoops up 61 per cent of the national income — down from 72 per cent in 1960. But the racial divide is no longer the biggest factor behind inequality in South Africa. The ILO estimates that in 1980 that divide accounted for 65 per cent of all earnings inequality. Today it has dropped to 42 per cent.

Some blacks — such as Mr Moleketti and Mr Makgoe — have jumped the fence into South Africa's well-heeled urban centres, while the majority are left in poverty.

The labour market trends strike at the heart of the post-apartheid revolution. Was the goal simply to create a market economy without the racism? If so, progress is being made. But if the aim was to tackle the overall levels of inequality, to reduce poverty for blacks (and some whites), the post-apartheid government has achieved nothing. On any measure, South Africa has a crippling level of unemployment.

But the government is afraid a more expansionary economic policy, or large-scale public sector employment programmes, will de-rail its attempts to win credibility on the world's financial markets. So the highest real interest rates in the world are maintained, while a tough plan to bring South Africa's budget deficit down to 4 per cent of GDP is pushed through. Tough choices, indeed. But tough for whom?

## In Brief

THE prospect of a higher than expected UK budget deficit may rule out pre-election tax cuts. With no underlying improvement in the public finances over the past year, analysts believe the Chancellor will have to revise his budget prediction of a £22.5 billion deficit in 1996-97 to about £30 billion.

THE UK Office of Fair Trading is to investigate the alliance between British Airways and American Airlines even though the link does not involve any exchange of assets of equity.

HOPES that Japan is set to emerge from a prolonged recession have been fuelled by figures showing the fastest quarterly rate of expansion for 23 years. Japanese output jumped by 3 per cent between January and March, an annualised growth rate of 12.7 per cent.

LLOYD'S of London has made a £3.1 billion offer to Names hit by the market's £8 billion losses in an attempt to stop crippling litigation. About 3,000 investors still face bills of between £75,000 and £100,000 more than their funds in the market.

A NEW crisis threatens Eurotunnel's hopes of refinancing its $13.86 million debt. Chairman Sir Alistair Morton is determined to oppose proposals by a bankers' consortium to convert up to half the company's borrowing into new shares.

FRENCH culture minister Philippe Douste-Blazy has launched a campaign to reduce VAT on recorded music. He argues it is just as creative as books and wants it included on a European Union list of products and services which may carry reduced VAT.

RON BAKER, the former head of Financial Products Group at the collapsed Barings bank, stunned a Commons Select Committee hearing by accusing Barings' former management of a cover-up and possible conspiracy with rogue Singapore trader Nick Leeson.

## FOREIGN EXCHANGES

| | Sterling rates June 24 | Sterling rates June 17 |
|---|---|---|
| Australia | 1.9453-1.9492 | 1.9508-1.9558 |
| Austria | 16.59-16.60 | 16.49-16.51 |
| Belgium | 48.50-48.54 | 48.23-48.28 |
| Canada | 2.0992-2.1007 | 2.1108-2.1122 |
| Denmark | 9.07-9.08 | 9.03-9.04 |
| France | 7.98-7.99 | 7.95-7.96 |
| Germany | 2.3574-2.3590 | 2.3444-2.3461 |
| Hong Kong | 11.91-11.92 | 11.98-11.99 |
| Ireland | 0.9721-0.9732 | 0.9711-0.9722 |
| Italy | 2,371-2,373 | 2,378-2,379 |
| Japan | 167.92-168.09 | 168.10-168.21 |
| Netherlands | 2.6420-2.6444 | 2.6259-2.6280 |
| New Zealand | 2.2728-2.2752 | 2.2872-2.2900 |
| Norway | 10.07-10.08 | 10.06-10.07 |
| Portugal | 242.03-242.28 | 241.46-241.69 |
| Spain | 198.22-198.44 | 198.05-198.28 |
| Sweden | 10.23-10.25 | 10.29-10.30 |
| Switzerland | 1.9445-1.9465 | 1.9302-1.9322 |
| USA | 1.5396-1.5401 | 1.5460-1.5451 |
| ECU | 1.2441-1.2452 | 1.2405-1.2414 |

FTSE100 Share index down 50.7 at 3710.8. FT30 index down 28.9 at 4433.3. Gold down $0.50 at [illegible]



The Washington Post



# Court Rules Against 'Three-Strikes' Law

**William Claiborne in Los Angeles**

THE California Supreme Court ruled last week that judges who believe a mandatory 25-years-to-life sentence under the state's "three-strikes-and-you're-out" law is too harsh may ignore the law and impose a lighter sentence.

The landmark ruling by the state's highest court effectively emasculated the tough "three-strikes" sentencing law that was enacted by the legislature in 1994 to get habitual felons off the street. The seven justices said their decision applies to past cases, thereby allowing thousands of prisoners to seek resentencing.

The three-strikes law was overwhelmingly endorsed by California voters in November 1994 in a statewide referendum that was fueled by public anger over the kidnapping and murder of 12-year-old Polly Klaas by a paroled ex-convict. Klaas' killer, Richard Allen Davis, was convicted of murder last week and faces a possible death sentence.

At least 24 states have some version of the three-strikes law, which was based on a concept popularized in the 1992 presidential campaign and which later became a symbol of the national determination to crack down on crime by locking up for long terms habitual criminals who are responsible for most serious offenses. More states have habitual offender laws with enhanced sentences for second or third felony convictions.

The state Supreme Court decision followed a series of widely-publicized cases in which Superior Court judges in Los Angeles — and in some cases, juries — rebelled over the prospect of a defendant receiving a life sentence for a non-violent felony like burglary or drug possession. Some judges have refused to comply with the law, and in some cases juries pleaded with judges to reduce third felony charges to misdemeanors or strike prior convictions in order to circumvent the mandatory three-strikes sentence.

California Secretary of State Bill Jones, author of the law, condemned the court's ruling and said he will sponsor a bill to reinstate the mandatory 25-years-to-life sentence on third felonies for those previously convicted of two violent or serious felonies.

The law on which the court ruled last week defines certain violent or serious crimes as "strikes" and mandates at least twice the usual prison term for a second strike. Third-strike defendants sentenced to the mandatory 25 years to life are not eligible for parole consideration until they have served 80 per cent of their minimum sentence, or 20 years.

The law does, however, give prosecutors the power ask that a judge disregard a previous strike "in the furtherance of justice" and impose a lesser sentence. But it does not say whether judges can take such action on their own, an omission that has brought several conflicting rulings by state appellate courts and resulted in last week's decision.

The ruling was based on the case of a San Diego man, Jesus Romero, 32, whose previous "strikes" were for a residential burglary and a second attempted residential burglary. After he pleaded guilty in 1994 to possessing .13 grams of cocaine, a Superior Court judge ruled that 25 years to life would be cruel and unusual punishment and sentenced Romero to only six years. A Court of Appeals overruled the sentence, and Romero's lawyers appealed to the Supreme Court.

Jones, a former Republican assemblyman, called the court decision a "clear affront" to the 72 per cent of voters who approved the 1994 non-binding referendum supporting the three-strikes law.

He said the "three strikes" law has dramatically reduced crime over the last two years, and resulted in a "massive exodus" of parolees from California because of their fear of the law's tough third strike sentences. In addition, California's crime rate has declined by 13.4 per cent, far above the drop in the national crime rate.

For that reason, he said, he will push legislation reinstating the mandatory aspect of the law.

Legal experts here said a state constitutional amendment would be needed to legislatively nullify the Supreme Court's ruling because six of the justices also held that the three-strikes measure, by tying judges's hands, violates the constitutional separation of legislative and judicial powers. The law was adopted in 1994 by more than two-thirds of the Assembly, then controlled by Democrats — a large enough majority to put a constitutional amendment on the ballot. Republicans now control the Assembly and could likely muster even more votes.

Critics of the law say it has hopelessly clogged the state's criminal courts because many defendents faced with the prospect of a life sentence are now demanding jury trials instead of plea bargaining.

# U.S. to Veto Boutros-Ghali's Bid for Second Term at UN

**Thomas W. Lippman and John M. Goshko**

IN DECIDING to force out Boutros Boutros-Ghali as U.N. Secretary General, President Clinton has jettisoned a political liability that hung over his re-election campaign but risked picking a fight with the rest of the world.

The president has moved to insulate himself from charges by his Republican challenger, Bob Dole, that he jeopardized U.S. global interests by giving too much responsibility to a prickly foreign bureaucrat who mismanaged crises in Somalia and Bosnia.

But Clinton has provoked criticism from U.N. delegates of many nations for a unilateral announcement that the United States — which owes the United Nations more than $1 billion in overdue bills and other assessments — would veto Boutros-Ghali's request for a second term.

Senior U.S. officials said last week that the Clinton administration has no replacement candidate in mind, and had believed it would not be necessary to come up with one now because they expected Boutros-Ghali to accept a face-saving, one-year extension of his term.

With the Egyptian diplomat's last-minute refusal to do that, the United States is in the position of telling everyone else it will not accept Boutros-Ghali, while offering no specific alternative of its own.

Senior U.S. officials made no secret of their displeasure with Boutros-Ghali's decision to defy Washington and seek a new five-year term starting in January. "I think his posture on it is unnecessarily confrontational," Secretary of State Warren Christopher said. "We have the veto power and we're prepared to exercise it."

Dole's campaign press secretary, Nelson Warfield, issued a statement describing the decision to nix Boutros-Ghali as "the most stunning example yet of Bob Dole governing from the campaign trail . . . Dole's pledge to put the the United States' interests ahead of the United Nations' interests brings cheers from audiences, and apparently Bill Clinton has heard the applause."

But administration officials said serious discussion of what to do about Boutros-Ghali began in December, months before Dole became the presumptive GOP nominee. They described months of intense negotiations in which Washington enlisted emissaries such as former Secretary of State Cyrus Vance to negotiate an orderly departure by Boutros-Ghali, who is 73 and came into office pledging to serve only one term.

"I've invested a lot of time and energy into trying to ensure that there would be a dignified and appropriate withdrawal," Christopher said at a luncheon meeting with Washington Post editors and reporters. "That seems not to be likely now."

Boutros-Ghali has the support of many African delegates, who believe a secretary general from their continent should have the same two full terms as most of his predecessors.

Russia, China and France also are supporting Boutros-Ghali, according to U.N. diplomats. The widespread view at the United Nations is that Boutros-Ghali, a tireless worker who speaks English, French and Arabic, is as good a secretary general as the world body is likely to get. Hardly any U.N. members share Washington's intense preoccupation with reform, and most delegates appear to believe that the U.S. decision was flagrantly a domestic political decision.

According to U.S. officials familiar with the decision-making process, U.S. Ambassador Madeleine Albright told White House national-security adviser Anthony Lake late last year she believed Boutros-Ghali intended to seek a second term and that the Clinton administration should make an early decision about what it wanted to do.

The secretary general had three strikes against him, U.S. officials said: He had alienated Washington by the way the United Nations handled the military operations in Somalia and Bosnia; he had shown himself insufficiently deferential to U.S. policy wishes; and he resisted U.S. efforts to streamline the United Nations and cut costs.

# Test Ban Treaty in Trouble

EDITORIAL

THE bleak possibility arises that negotiations on a test ban treaty may fall into deepening deadlock or — an even more bitter prospect — produce a treaty that will languish and not be put into effect. More is at stake than the disappointment of diplomats at the prospective withering of an international project that has been pursued for 40 years. A comprehensive test ban treaty would outlaw tests in the one place, underground, where they now are still allowed. Such a treaty would contribute to preventing nations without bombs from acquiring one and nations with bombs from building more. Default would leave the world a measurably more dangerous place.

The principal difficulty now bearing in on the negotiators at Geneva arises from the real but undeclared bomb programs of India, Pakistan and Israel. A test ban treaty that did not sooner or later bind these three "threshold" states would not be serious. But all of them face what they regard as grave security threats, and they are reluctant to be contained.

Actually, the Israelis could yet go along. Tests appear not to be central to their nuclear program, and the text may meet their requirements for a role in treaty implementation and for protection from mischievous inquiry. India is the difficult one. It continues to set as a condition that the five declared nuclear states (the United States, Russia, China, France, Britain) first accept a timetable for their own disarmament. Pakistan is unlikely to ratify if India does not.

Handling the Threshold Three was always going to be hard. The best way to proceed was always first to get the treaty ratified and brought into force and then to win over the Three — by using the treaty to help calm global nuclear fever and by providing alternatives to nuclear armament, including political agreements with threat countries. Unfortunately, the other four declared nuclear powers have been pressing Washington to bring in the Three before the treaty enters into force. This puts pressure on India, pressure it seems quite able to withstand.

President Clinton has insisted that a test ban is important. And so it is. This is his moment to remind the four other powers of their immense common interest in establishing this check on nuclear spread. A treaty without early participation by India, Pakistan and Israel would be flawed, but its very coming into effect would be a force drawing them in.

India has picked up the support of Iran, but its friends need to convey to it that its best chance of having its nuclear prescriptions heard outside the ranks of the rogues lies in joining the treaty.

# Toxic Gases Found During Gulf War

**Bradley Graham and David Brown**

AFTER YEARS of declaring that U.S. forces involved in the 1991 Persian Gulf War did not encounter Iraqi chemical weapons, the Pentagon announced last week that at least one weapons storage area exploded by American troops immediately after the war did contain two highly toxic gases.

During a hastily called news conference at the Pentagon, senior defense officials said they have no clinical evidence that any of the 300 to 400 U.S. soldiers in the vicinity of the bunker when it was detonated were exposed to the chemicals. But they said their research efforts had just begun.

Among the unanswered questions is whether exposure to the chemicals might have longterm effects on the health of soldiers who served in the gulf region. "Our understanding of this episode is still partial," Kenneth Bacon, the Pentagon's chief spokesman, told reporters.

The surprise disclosure may feed the longstanding suspicions of tens of thousands of Gulf War veterans who believe they have undiagnosed chronic illnesses resulting from their service in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Iraq. Some of the symptoms cited by these veterans include pains in the joints, difficulty concentrating, changes in mood, rashes, breathing problems and intestinal complaints. Collectively they have come to be known as "Gulf War syndrome."

Many possible causes of the illness have been offered, and one of the more popular ones is that U.S. soldiers suffered nerve gas poisoning. Several blue-ribbon panels of scientists, however, have examined the issue and concluded that there is no single explanation for veterans' ailments, and that there is no evidence any soldiers were exposed to chemical weapons.

"The Department of Defense has found no evidence that Iraq used weapons during the war," Bacon stressed again last week, "and so far, we have found no clinical evidence that U.S. troops were exposed to chemical weapons."

Pentagon officials said chemical agents, including sarin and mustard gases, were present in a bunker located in a large ammunition storage site called Kamisiyah. The sprawling depot is about 12 miles southeast of the Iraqi city of Nasiriyah, near the northern boundary of Kuwait.

Iraq had declared Kamisiyah a chemical-weapons storage site shortly after the Gulf War, and U.S. and United Nations inspection teams found nerve-agent rockets and mustard gas shells in open pits there. But they had not known such weapons were present in the bunker.

Bacon told reporters that U.S. military specialists trained in the detection of chemical weapons had surveyed the bunker before its detonation during the first week of March 1991 and concluded no chemical agents were present. They also tested the area after the bunker was exploded and again found no trace of chemical agents.

A United Nations inspection team returned to the site in October 1991 and, in a report made available to U.S. government officials, quoted Iraqi officials suggesting the bunker had contained chemical agents. But the report was filed away without further notice, according to defense officials.



Masked threat . . . Rangers from the U.S. 82nd Airborne wear their gas masks during drill under the hot desert sun while on duty in Saudi Arabia in 1990 PHOTOGRAPH: SCOTT APPLEWHITE

The report surfaced again, Bacon said, as part of an interagency review of all such evidence ordered by President Clinton in March 1995 to help explain the health problems suffered by some Gulf War veterans.

Additionally, members of the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) charged with ensuring Iraq remains free of chemical and other weapons of mass destruction returned to Kamisiyah last month for another inspection. They found the remains of shells lined with polyethylene, a liner typically used by the Iraqis in weapons that carried chemicals.

"UNSCOM has concluded that the chemical weapons were in one bunker slightly more than one mile from the location where the chemical weapons were previously detected," Bacon said.

Members of the 37th Engineering Battalion, based at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, were about three miles from the bunker when it was detonated, defense officials said.

"If there were any acute health effects from those troops who were closest — the engineers — we would have known it then," said Dr. Stephen Joseph, assistant secretary of defense for health affairs. "We have no record of anything being noticed at that time . . . The issue really turns on: Were there any low-level, chronic health effects from the dispersion of any exposure that took place?"

So far, efforts to correlate the health data from the 20,000 Gulf War veterans registered in the government's clinical evaluation program have turned up nothing to suggest the bunker's detonation produced any longterm health effect on U.S. soldiers, Joseph said. But he called the research "very preliminary."

"One of the reasons we're having this announcement," Bacon said, "is to call attention to what happened in this area with this bunker, so that people who may feel they have relevant information can come forward and contact the investigators . . . as well as the medical people."

Defense officials said that analysts are reviewing weather and wind conditions at the time of the bunker's destruction. Moreover, U.S. officials plan to look more closely at another eight weapons storage sites in Iraq known or suspected to have contained chemical weapons.

"This disclosure raises a number of disturbing questions regarding the exposure of Persian Gulf War veterans to chemical and biological agents," said Rep. Lane Evans, D-Illinois, who chaired several hearings on possible Gulf War illnesses. ". . . We cannot let this new information become an endless trail that only produces more questions."

# Market-Worship Widens Income Gap

OPINION
**Robert Kuttner**

THE Census Bureau, in a new report, has officially confirmed the findings of countless other studies: The income gap has been widening for nearly three decades. Between 1968 and 1994, the Census found, the share of total income going to the top fifth of American households increased from 40.5 percent to 46.9 percent. In the previous quarter century, society had been growing more equal.

According to the report, A Brief Look At Postwar U.S. Income Inequality, the bottom 80 percent lost income share. The biggest gains of all went to the top 5 percent. To add insult to injury, this increasing inequality occurred during a period when the overall rate of economic growth slowed down.

Most troubling is that widening inequality seems rooted in structural characteristics of this economic era, not in deliberate government policies. As the Census report documents, inequality has widened both during periods of relatively liberal social and tax policies, and during conservative ones.

Not surprisingly, inequality increased during the 1980s, when the Reagan administration deliberately cut taxes for the rich and benefits for the poor. But gaps also widened in the late-1960s and the mid-1990s, when the tax code was more progressive and social spending was rising.

At bottom, the widening gap between the rich and everyone else reflects the shift to a purer market economy and the erosion of institutions that once offset market forces. A generation ago, regulated industries could count on predictable profits and pass them on to employees. That meant secure careers and earnings in many industries.

Other industries, such as auto and steel, were not regulated but were sheltered from global competition, and did not engage in fierce price competition with each other. They did not move offshore to cut costs. In most regulated or protected industries, unions enjoyed a strong foothold, and bargained to make sure profits would be shared with workers.

But in an era of globalization and deregulation, wages get battered down while rewards to entrepreneurs and shareholders soar. Chief executive compensation was up 23 percent last year, while wages were flat. The value of the stock market has increased more than threefold in less than a decade. And with the Federal Reserve refusing to let unemployment go below 5.5 percent, most labor markets are nicely slack — just the way employers like them.

Nothing in the election year programs of either party addresses these fundamental shifts. Republicans propose to improve people's economic well-being with tax cuts and more deregulation. Democrats offer a series of programs in education and training, but funded at token levels that will do little to alter the larger trends.

During the postwar boom, public policy cut in the direction of greater equality. The tax code was much more steeply graduated. The bottom half of taxpayers paid less than 10 percent of their total income in taxes. The top bracket was 91 percent. Corporate tax rates were much higher than today.

On the spending side, social outlay on a much grander scale did help to increase economic equality. Social Security lifted millions of older Americans out of poverty. The GI Bill sent millions on to higher education. Federal housing loans allowed millions to become homeowners for the first time. But even these very large expenditures operated in tandem with a private economy whose institutions were structured to favor greater equality of earnings.

Can we reverse these deeply rooted sources of inequality? Or are they just endemic to a capitalist economy?

There are certainly ways to make a market economy more equal — stronger unions, faster growth, more generous income transfers, greater regulation, or strategies to broaden and democratize corporate ownership. But in today's climate of simple market-worship, any of them would require a political revolution.

# 'Tourists' Puzzle Colombia

**Douglas Farah in Bogota**

AT FIRST, the large influx of Nigerian tourists in recent months baffled Colombian immigration officials. Most spoke no Spanish, appeared to have little money and often looked weak and dazed as they left the country.

Then, in April, after having grown suspicious of a large tourist group and followed it, police learned the reason. In raids at three hotels here, police found 22 Nigerians and 31 citizens of other West African nations packing 180 pounds of cocaine into their shirts, shoes and stomachs to take to Europe, Asia and Japan, where the price of cocaine is far higher than in the United States.

When the suspects said they were tourists, police asked what they had come to see in Bogota, a mountain metropolis 8,000 feet above sea level and more than 200 miles from the Pacific coast. The Nigerians said they had come to visit Bogota's beaches, police said. Two dozen of those rounded up remain in prison here, charged with drug trafficking.

U.S. and Colombian narcotics experts said the presence of Nigerians is the latest sign of how Nigerian crime syndicates, which already control most of the heroin shipments from Asia to Europe, are expanding.

The Nigerian groups appear to be moving into the Latin American cocaine and heroin markets, and they are doing it by building networks of "mules," people recruited to transport two to five pounds of drugs on their bodies. While a kilo (2.2 pounds) of cocaine sells for about $15,000 in Miami, the price can reach $45,000 in Europe and $70,000 in Japan.

Law enforcement officials said Nigerian-controlled syndicates are not trying to compete with Colombia's Cali cocaine and heroin cartel, the largest in the world, by building complete trafficking structures. Rather, the officials said, the mules buy the cocaine here in relatively small amounts, then resell it abroad.

So far at least, the Nigerian traffickers are dealing with low-level Colombian traffickers for small quantities, rather than cutting deals with senior Colombian traffickers.

"In the overall scheme of things, [Nigerian drug trafficking] is serious, but it pales in comparison to larger problems, as orchestrated by Colombians and Mexican organizations, for the United States," said Craig Chretien, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration's chief of international operations.

Some carriers place the drug in a condom, wrap the condom in carbon paper or black electrical tape so that it does not show up properly in an X-ray machine, then soak the ball in butter or oil for lubrication and swallow it. But if a condom ruptures in the stomach, it can bring a painful death. To avoid that, carriers often go on special diets and avoid eating during the long flights.





# Bodyguard Who Aimed for the Top

**Lee Hockstader in Moscow**

IN A FLEETING conversation on the campaign trail three weeks ago, Lt. Gen. Alexander Korzhakov, Boris Yeltsin's security chief, drinking buddy and closest confidant, said he doubted a runoff would take place in Russia's presidential elections.

Why not? this reporter asked him. Could Yeltsin win an outright majority in the first round? Or would the runoff race be canceled?

Korzhakov flashed his Delphic smile. "In Russian we have an expression," he said. "Only a blind man can see the future."

Korzhakov evidently could not. Snagged by a trap he set himself, the crafty Korzhakov, widely seen as the second-most powerful man in Russia, was fired last week along with the two other members of a troika that constituted the most influential and entrenched anti-reform clique in the Russian government.

The significance of the firings extends far beyond Moscow's beltway. The removal of Korzhakov, Federal Security Service Chief Mikhail Barsukov and First Deputy Prime Minister Oleg Soskovets could change the policies and personality of the government. Each of the men fired last week, in his own sphere of influence, represented what critics of the government have identified as major problems of the first five years of Russian democracy.

Said a diplomat in Moscow: "It's sort of the good czar getting rid of the evil boyars. The timing is great. It's an unambiguous plus for Yeltsin."

More than any other individual in government, Korzhakov, a confidant to Yeltsin for a decade, has come to symbolize the increasingly closed, secretive and Byzantine nature of the Kremlin. His unique access and total loyalty to Yeltsin, and control over who got access to the Russian leader, made his position unrivaled.

In recent years, high-ranking administration officials, convinced that Korzhakov bugged their offices and tapped their telephones, have taken to communicating with each other in whispered conversations or written messages.

His intrigues are legion and legendary. In 1994, armed men under Korzhakov's command raided the Moscow headquarters of the Most Group, an influential banking and media conglomerate. Most is closely tied to Moscow's popular mayor, Yuri Luzhkov, who was said to be harboring presidential ambitions at the time. Shortly after the raid, Luzhkov announced he would not be running for president.

Sergei Filatov, Yeltsin's campaign manager, has accused Korzhakov of actively working to defeat Anatoly Sobchak, the liberal reformer who was mayor of St. Petersburg until he lost his reelection bid last month.

Moreover, Korzhakov has frequently overstepped his official security responsibilities in ways that Moscow insiders found chilling. In 1994, for example, a scandal erupted when it was disclosed that Korzhakov had written a letter to Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin with unsolicited advice on economic policy. In the letter, Korzhakov described as "absolutely impermissible" the government's pledge to the World Bank that Russia would allow its domestic oil prices to conform to world prices.

In another widely reported episode, Chernomyrdin's former chief of staff, Vladimir Kvasov, found out the hard way that Korzhakov did not confine his activities to security. Soon after arriving in his post in 1994, Kvasov told Korzhakov to butt out of government business and stick to guarding the president.

"After that, my telephones were disconnected, including my government hot line," said Kvasov. "Of course they had to connect them again, but my impudence was not forgotten." A short time later, Kvasov was fired.



Goodbye for now. . . President Yeltsin (left) with Gen Korzhakov during the election campaign PHOTOGRAPH: VIKTOR KOROTAYEV

Soskovets, an ally of Korzhakov whose deft bureaucratic infighting and smooth manners have earned him the nickname "Black Prince", almost as frequently has been a target of criticism by reformers. Despite his widely perceived hostility to reform, and especially privatization, he was often mentioned as a strong candidate to succeed Chernomyrdin as prime minister.

THE FORMER director of a huge steel mill who rose to be the last Soviet minister of metallurgy, Soskovets has extensive ties to the directors who still hold sway at Russia's crumbling but sprawling military-industrial complex. He also has been the subject of serious charges of corruption, including complicity in the disappearance or misappropriation of hundreds of millions of dollars earmarked for the reconstruction of the breakaway region of Chechnya.

As first deputy premier — in effect, the No. 3 man in government after Yeltsin and Chernomyrdin — Soskovets has been an ardent advocate for continuing government subsidies to rust-belt industries and unprofitable plants that Yeltsin's market-minded reformers would rather break up and close down.

Barsukov, head of the Federal Security Service, the successor agency to the KGB, is allied with Korzhakov and used to be his nominal boss in the Kremlin security apparatus. Indeed, it was Korzhakov who urged Yeltsin to appoint Barsukov to his current post.

Barsukov had kept a low profile until this January, when he headed the botched operation to free scores of hostages captured by Chechen fighters in southern Russia.

The operation in the village of Pervomayskoye was a fiasco. Officials announced that all the hostages had been killed by the Chechen gunmen, then pulverized the village with multiple rocket launchers and heavy artillery. As it turned out, most of the hostages were still alive; it was the Russian operation that killed many of them. Most humiliating for Barsukov, many of the Chechens escaped what the Russians called an airtight siege.

Last week's firings are certain to cheer many liberals and champions of democracy in Russia and abroad. But in Yeltsin's five years as president, many of the people he has fired have not stayed fired. Dismissed from high-profile posts in which they have slipped up, his aides tend to turn up in other government jobs — perhaps less visible but still influential.

# U.S. Drops to Fourth in Aid League Table

**Thomas W. Lippman**

**THE United States, once the leader in aid to developing nations, has dropped to fourth place in the amount of money it spends on such aid and is last among donor nations in the percentage of economic output devoted to foreign aid, according to new figures.**

**Japan, France and Germany contributed more money to Third World development last year than did the United States. It fell to fourth place from second, behind Japan, in 1994.**

**Furthermore, the United States was last among the 21 countries in the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development in the share of national output devoted to Third World assistance, the OECD reports.**

**Among the countries that contributed more of their gross national product were Portugal, Ireland and New Zealand, negligible economic powers by comparison with the United States, which has by far the world's biggest economy.**

**The OECD figures were announced at a news conference last week by the Clinton administration's foreign aid director, J. Brian Atwood, and spokesmen for non governmental groups that support foreign aid. They used the figures to argue that US aid has fallen too far and that Washington is abdicating its global responsibilities.**

**"Our foreign assistance program accounts for less than 1 percent of our national federal government, budget, about $34 per taxpaying family," Mr. Atwood said. "That's not generous. We should feel ashamed. We are failing to fulfil our responsibilities as a world power. More importantly, we are failing our own national interests and we're failing our own national values."**

**The Agency for International Development, which Mr. Atwood heads, has been hit especially hard by budget cuts imposed by the Republican-controlled Congress, where many members are hostile to most forms of foreign aid.**

**Congress has cut funds for development and humanitarian assistance not including military aid — from $8.4 billion in fiscal 1995 to $7 billion this year. Such funds are scheduled to decrease a bit more next year.**

**Using slightly different categories, the OECD credited the United States with $7.3 billion in development aid in 1995. Japan gave $15.5 billion, France $8.44 billion and Germany $7.5 billion.**

**The US. figure was one-tenth of 1 percent of gross national product, or the total value at retail prices of all the goods and services that are produced by a national economy in a given time period.**

**That figure was the lowest in the contributors' group. The highest was Denmark's, at just under 1 percent of GNP.**

# Missing the Blooms as Time Goes By

OPINION
**Ellen Goodman**

THE LILACS have gone by. I take note of this with an unexpected snap of regret as I take my morning commute from the kitchen to the driveway.

The flowers had made their annual appearance on the bushes that stand beside my backdoor. For two weeks, they had permeated the air with a seductive promise the way a perfume wafts into the atmosphere of a department store.

I planned to take up their offer, to spend time in their company. But now the last of the blooms has turned a crusty deadhead shade of beige. And I had paid only the most transient of visits, enjoyed only a contact high, a small whiff of their possibilities.

This morning, it is the absence of lilacs that finally stops me in my tracks. I brake belatedly to pay the toll of attention to what is now missing. A year's worth of lilacs, an entire life span of flowers.

I repeat the phrase in my mind: The lilacs have gone by. It is what gardeners say. But in fact, the lilacs stayed in one place and I had gone by them, hurrying, on the move.

Behind me in this small city garden there are irises in bloom now. The peonies are on the way, the ants already feasting the sweet sap off their buds. They will be followed by day lilies and black-eyed Susans, by asters and fall. I run down the perennial calendar and in a wave, become nostalgic for the summer that has yet to officially begin.

Is it seasonal, this consciousness of the racing pulse of daily life? Is the awareness of flowers "going by" more than a banal metaphor for transience? Is it, rather, some alarm coded into our DNA?

The days are still lengthening, but lately my friends have been wistful about time, the common currency of their lives. They talk of spending too much time on what are dubbed essentials. Too many hours seem to be taken out of their week, as if the week were a paycheck, too much withheld before they get to some small luxury, a moment of discretionary spending.

At lunch last week, a woman not given to maudlin cost accounting had figured out on her actuarial table that she has probably 30 more chances to see the pink ladyslippers in the woods. Thirty is a lot said the woman who is approaching 50 herself. But it is also, suddenly, finite.

The other day, an economist who jet lags between cities and seasons, stopped to talk about the lupine he was leaving behind on his way to Singapore. Why couldn't the geneticists manipulate the bloom dates for our convenience the way politicians move presidents' birthdays around for the benefit of a long weekend? In his mockery, there was longing.

This morning, dangling out of my briefcase is a plastic bag of excess black-eyed Susans that I dug up in a rush last night. Flowers for a friend. On the phone last week, we talked about the sense of channel-surfing through life. Work, click, kids, click, parents, click, errands, click. With split-second timing it was possible to cover everything — but only if we stay on the surface.

What happens when life becomes a list, we asked each other? When even the pleasurable things become items to check off? What happens when we are getting through the days? What are we getting through and to? But our thoughts were interrupted by call-waiting.

What times we are living in, time-deficient times in an era of high productivity and low sensibility.

A working woman on the television news the other night talked longingly about wanting time off to see her child play ball. Everyday in the paper there is a story about downsizing, rightsizing. There is growing pressure and pride in efficiency. Some are running scared, some are running to catch up, and others just running.

Maybe this speed trap is not so clear in the taupe sameness of winter when one day stretches endlessly like another. But sometimes, standing in a garden, a season can seem as short as the lifespan of a day lily. Sometimes, you catch a glimpse of something in human nature that longs to spend time lavishly. To relish as well as to produce.

On a late spring morning, there is a wistful reminder in this natural datebook. How quickly things "go by." Life and lilacs.

# Such Good Friends

Douglas Brinkley

KENNEDY AND NIXON:
The Rivalry That Shaped Postwar America
By Christopher Matthews
Simon & Schuster. 377pp. $25

THE 1960 presidential election was a squeaker. A record turnout gave Democratic contender John F. Kennedy the victory over Republican rival Richard M. Nixon by a mere 113,057 votes — the smallest margin of the 20th century. Speculation ran rampant that JFK won the contest courtesy of ballot-box stuffing in Illinois and Texas. Nevertheless, in what would prove to be perhaps the noblest public act in a long political career, Nixon accepted defeat with a stiff upper lip and a sportsman's magnanimity, blaming himself for being outmaneuvered by the debonair Massachusetts senator who was not just a formidable rival but also a cherished friend.

"Despite the intensity of the campaign and the narrow outcome," Edward Kennedy reflected on behalf of his family after Nixon died on April 22, 1994, "he accepted the results with grace and without rancor." Perhaps — but behind closed doors Nixon brooded, and over the months following the election a deep paranoia grew inside him: He thought that "the Kennedys" were hellbent on his destruction. According to Alexander Haig, a Nixon friend to the bitter end, "he believed until the day he died that Kennedy had stolen the election."

Christopher Matthews profiles these Cold War Machiavellians in Kennedy And Nixon: The Rivalry That Shaped Postwar America, a beautifully written, persuasive narrative that sheds new light not only on the personalities of the two ostentatious antagonists but also on postwar America in general. It is a compelling tale for the ages, casting JFK as the prodigal Mozart-like figure favored by grace and fortune, with Nixon as Antonio Salieri, excelling through willpower, gruntgrind inertia, and a talent for court politics. "If Americans viewed John F. Kennedy as their shining hero," Matthews writes, "they also recognized the five o'clock shadow of Richard Nixon in the fluorescent light of their bathroom mirror."

Oddly enough, throughout the 1950s Kennedy and Nixon were good friends. Matthews details the vastly different "growing-up" years of JFK's New England and Nixon's Southern California — drawing heavily from the previous biographies by historians Herbert Parmet and Stephen Ambrose — but by the time the pair of WWII veterans reached Washington, D.C. as congressmen in January 1947 they already shared the same lofty goal: the presidency of the United States. And they respected each other because of it. In fact, later that year the freshmen debated each other on national issues at McKeesport, Pennsylvania, JFK assuming the mantle of "fighting conservative" while Nixon tried to sell himself as a proponent of "practical liberalism." After the debate they ate together at a local grill, talked sports and caught the midnight train back to Washington.

When Nixon decided to run for the U.S. Senate in 1950, young JFK handed his Republican friend a large campaign contribution from no less than the redoubtable Joe Kennedy Sr. A few years later, when Eisenhower tapped Nixon to be a vice presidential candidate, JFK wrote his pal a congratulatory note: "I always knew you'd make it to the top. I just didn't think it would come this soon." Both were young men in a hurry, callously shoving aside an entire generation — those born between 1890 and 1913 — in their quest for the White House. Although JFK is usually considered the political shooting star of his generation, by the age of 43 Nixon had been elected to the House and the Senate and twice to the vice presidency. "Kennedy was the late bloomer," Matthews rightly maintains.

The friendship between JFK and Nixon solidified as a result of the 1952 election. Nixon was now vice president and JFK, after defeating popular incumbent Republican Henry Cabot Lodge, was the junior senator from Massachusetts. Fate would join them even in the Senate Office Building: Vice President Nixon was assigned room 362, Senator Kennedy 361. "Back then Nixon was as charmed by this handsome, joke-loving hall mate as anyone," Matthews writes. "He liked Kennedy, wanted to be like him, and very much wanted Kennedy to like him." When JFK had back surgery in 1954, Nixon checked in constantly to see how "Jack" was doing. "There is no one my husband admires more," Jacqueline Kennedy wrote. As JFK's condition worsened and rumors circulated that he was




near death, the vice president sobbed, "Poor brave Jack is going to die. Oh, God, don't let him die." Years later, at a 1959 New Year's Eve dinner party, JFK — still facing the likes of Lyndon Johnson, Humphrey, Adlai Stevenson and Stuart Symington in the upcoming primaries to become the Democratic presidential nominee — told the gathering that if he didn't get his party's nod he'd vote for Nixon.

JFK did, of course, get the nomination and was forced to attack Nixon if he wanted to win. It was not a prospect he relished. Because both candidates were ardent anti-communists with flexible positions on domestic issues, the campaign became one of personalities and slogans — the areas in which Kennedy, the self-styled "New Frontiersman," excelled. Still, the Democrat knew it was a real contest: Throughout the 1960 campaign, for example, Kennedy was often in pain from his Addison's disease, and some mornings it was hard for him to get out of bed. But David Powers, JFK's "body man," devised a surefire method to jar his candidate awake. At sunrise he would enter Kennedy's motel bedroom, pull open the curtains, and say: "I wonder where Dick Nixon is this time of day. I wonder how many factories he's been to, how many events he's had already." It worked every time.

The rivalry turned weird after the 1960 election. As Kennedy entered the White House to face troubles in Berlin, Cuba and Birmingham, Nixon was back on the stump campaigning for governor of California despite being hampered by the nickname "Tricky Dick," an unexpected attack from the right-wing of his own party, and allegations that millionaire Howard Hughes had lent his brother Donald questionable sums of capital in 1956. Nixon lost the 1962 governor's race to Democrat Edmund G. Brown.

While most pundits wrote Nixon off as politically dead, JFK knew better and assumed that no matter what happened in California, his old buddy Lazarus would once again be his rival in 1964. "Their early friendship," Matthews states, "had been a casualty of the electoral war." In early November 1963 Nixon began staging his comeback and publicly attacked JFK for everything from his leadership during the Cuban Missile Crisis to his possible hand in the murder of South Vietnamese President Ngo Dinh Diem. Then there was Dallas.

JFK's assassination shocked Nixon, not only because he lost his dear friend-cum-nemesis, but because it muddied his own political future. He immediately wrote Jacqueline Kennedy a heartfelt letter on the loss of her husband, and got a dose of advice in return: "I know how you feel — so long on the path — so closely missing the greatest prize — and now for you, the question comes up again, and you must commit all you and your family's hopes and efforts again — Just one thing I would say to you — if it does not work out as you have hoped for so long — please be consoled by what you already have — your life and your family."

The last third of Kennedy And Nixon deals with the legacy of Camelot, that eternal flame Jacqueline Kennedy physically placed on her husband's grave and which Nixon figuratively tried in vain to extinguish. Even though Nixon — whom Matthews dubs "the champion of squares" — appeared on the cover of Time magazine 56 times and was elected president twice, he was ever haunted by the Kennedy specter. When he ran for re-election again in 1968 the opponent he most feared was Robert F. Kennedy; in 1972 it was Edward Kennedy. In 1971 Nixon installed a White House taping system because he was worried that liberal, pro-Kennedy scholars would someday deny him "greatness" by ignoring his genuine accomplishments. By recording every syllable uttered in the Oval Office and in his Old Executive Office Building hideaway, Nixon believed he would triumph in the arena that mattered most: history. The result was, of course, Watergate.

Rivalries exist in politics, and Nixon's shortcomings, including his bouts of paranoia and despair, were his own and cannot be attributed to some bizarre Kennedyesque conspiracy or vendetta. According to Matthews, in the end JFK and Nixon each got the Washington memorial he deserved: "Today the Kennedy Center and the Watergate sit beside each other along the Potomac — like unmatched bookends."

# In the Amazon Armed With a Briefcase

Alan Ryan

AMAZON STRANGER
By Mike Tidwell
Lyons & Burford. 216pp. $22.95

THE LAST decade's steady stream of books about the Amazon rainforest has included some good ones, like Alex Shoumatoff's on Chico Mendes, and some that make us wonder. Mike Tidwell's Amazon Stranger is one of the very good ones.

Tidwell served with the Peace Corps in Africa, an experience that shaped his first book, The Ponds Of Kalambayi. His second, In the Shadow Of The White House, reported vividly on the drug scene in the nation's capital.

On the surface, Amazon Stranger is an oft-told tale of a virtuous and downtrodden but determined indigenous people struggling against greedy despoilers of the rainforest — in this case Petroecuador, Ecuador's national oil company. But the Cofan people are not at all like any we've read about before. An Indian tribe living deep in the forest near Ecuador's border with Colombia, they are 100 miles from the nearest airstrip and 70 from the nearest road. They live in harmony with their world, fishing, hunting peccaries, gathering and growing fruits and vegetables. And carefully studying the best position on the thatched roofs of their houses for the solar-energy panels that are due to be delivered any day now.

Their chief carries a briefcase and maintains an apartment in Quito as a base of operations, fully equipped with the latest in communications equipment. He is skillful at boardroom negotiations and at manipulating the media to favor his side in the continuing dispute with Petroecuador. He contemplates buying an ultralight aircraft as the ideal means of surveying not only his own demesne but the depredations of the oil interests forever encroaching on his tribe's territory in the forest. When not busy with his chiefly obligations, he sells the people of his tribe snacks and sodas from his well-equipped larder.

He is a white American.

Randy Borman is in his mid-thirties, the son of missionary parents. He grew up among the Cofan fluent in their language and expert in their lore. He came to the United States and attended Michigan State for a couple of years until homesickness brought him back to the forest. There are, at most, about 700 Cofan, and Borman rules only a small band, but he was democratically elected chief because the people thought he could do the job. He was Cofan in all but the accidents of birth and skin. He knew intimately the ways of the larger world outside. And he made his commitment for a lifetime, marrying a Cofan woman and starting a family.

Tidwell's eyewitness report of the wholesale destruction of natural riches is harrowing and Dantesque. His writing here is so intense that you can smell the oil. And the villains are so clear that little commentary is needed: Petroecuador, ably assisted by Dallas-based Maxus Energy, a company that, under the name Diamond Alkali, manufactured the defoliant Agent Orange during the Vietnam War. In dispute is the oil beneath the forest, enough to supply U.S. needs for all of 10 days.

In contrast, Tidwell sings lyrically and beautifully about the sheer joy of jungle travel. "In all their sublime grandeur," he writes, "macaws and kapok trees, dolphins and sherbet butterflies have a way of chasing away dark turns of mind."

But the image that will linger longest is certainly Borman, with his briefcase and jaguar whiskers painted on his face with the red juice of achiote berries, moody, contradictory, obsessed, swinging between disparate psyches; fighting the oil interests but using outboard motors on the local river. He's going to be in the headlines one day.

Tidwell is an unusually graceful writer, his scope wide-angled, his curiosity large, and he has the rare ability to convince us that the truths he writes about are self-evident.



# China speeds up rate of executions

Francis Deron in Beijing

THE current crackdown on crime in China appears to have surpassed the record level of death sentences handed down and carried out in 1983. Local newspapers report that in China's southern province of Guangdong alone, 25 people were executed on June 18.

Provincial newspapers reaching the Agence France-Presse office in Beijing report that 109 death sentences were handed down across the country on one day in June, and nearly all were carried out. Amnesty International notes that 650 death sentences were reported in the space of a month and a half after the government gave the order to step up the "strike hard" campaign.

The death sentence is increasingly being handed down for crimes of a less serious nature. It is no longer limited to murder, rape and violent assaults. Seven men involved in selling women were among those killed by firing squads early this month in the central province of Anhu. Eight cattle rustlers also suffered the same fate in Heilongjiang in the northeast.

Official announcements supply squalid details about the state of Chinese society. We learn that in the trafficking of women, the average "return" on a marriageable young woman, based on 119 women sold, is about 2,000 yuan ($260). As for rustlers, they pocket $60,000 in deals involving several hundred head of cattle.

The president of the Beijing high court rather ingenuously justified the severity of sentences passed by pointing out that the seriousness of the crime increased when the offence was repeated. But increasing penalties does not seem to be reducing crime. More than 20 per cent of defendants convicted recently in Guangdong province had already served prison terms.

Amnesty International says 3,612 death sentences were pronounced in 1995, and 2,535 of them carried out, compared with 2,785 death sentences and 2,050 executions the previous year. Three thousand executions were reported in 1983, but the organisation believes the real figure could have been as high as 10,000.

The images of condemned people that appear on television daily as they are driven to their execution in "tumbrels" right up to the moment they are put to death do not seem to shock people. And although the executions don't frighten off criminals, they do reassure ordinary people, who aren't used to crime motivated by greed.

Take aim . . . Beijing's traffic police take part in a weapon's training course. A crackdown to halt increasing crime in China has led to much harsher sentencing

None the less, in a cautious statement published in the Daily Law Journal, lawyers have called on the government to follow the procedures laid down when passing death sentences, something that law courts tend to rush through.

The government hasn't given any hint as to the political motivations that one suspects underlie this brisk campaign to clean up society. But the growing crime rate demonstrates that the imbalance in society is increasing, and some find little difficulty in blaming this on the enthusiasm with which the Chinese have embraced Deng Xiaoping's exhortation to get rich.

All this has not prevented the justice minister, Xiao Yang, from declaring that "the rule of law will prevail in China by the year 2000". Xiao said that this would be brought about in particular by a "five-year plan designed to make people in rural areas familiar with the existing laws", which was being put into effect.

(June 20)

# France criticised for treatment of refugees

Nathaniel Herzberg

FRENCH immigration policy comes in for sharp criticism from the International Human Rights Federation (FIDH) in a 31-page report that draws attention to the way the French administration treats asylum-seekers and illegal immigrants.

The report, drafted by three heads of foreign human rights associations invited to look into the situation in France — Lucie Lemonde (Canada), Toufik Bouderbalah (Tunisia) and René Degni-Segui (Ivory Coast) — is the result of meetings carried out and investigations undertaken by the organisation.

We thought that we knew everything about French policy towards asylum-seekers — the routine official insistence that asylum-seekers must have visas, the drastic restrictions on the number of visas granted, the fines imposed on those who transport immigrants without proper documents, and the barriers raised to prevent unwanted foreigners from entering French territory are well known.

Similarly, the authorities' practice of refusing to let illegal passengers land in French ports for the purpose of filing a petition for asylum has been frequently reported in the media.

However, the methods employed against illegal immigrants at Paris's Charles de Gaulle airport have remained vague. During a day spent at the airport, human rights investigators saw actions by officials that they say "raises grave doubts about the possibility of even filing a request for asylum".

They cite the case of a young Nigerian man whom they found locked up in the airport transit lounge. "He had tears in his eyes and literally clung to the members of the mission. He told us in English that he wanted to file a petition for asylum, but that he had no interpreter and that nobody took heed of his request. He was clutching a number of papers, newspaper cuttings and so on.

"We translated his story to the inspector accompanying us, who said the young man had not asked for anything. He assured us the man would be transferred and his request registered."

With cases cited to back up its assertions, the commission criticises the refusal to register claims for asylum and points to the "almost insurmountable difficulties" that foreigners encounter in making such claims.

THE REPORT says that the number of foreigners granted refugee status has dropped sharply and draws attention to the French authorities' refusal to consider persecution that is not directly attributable to a government as being grounds for seeking asylum. This has the effect of shutting out all Algerians who are threatened by Islamic extremists.

The second part of the report deals with the way immigrants are deported once their requests for asylum have been rejected.

"Foreigners without proper papers are perceived as ordinary criminals," the report says. It criticises the many infringements of the rule of law by judges themselves. Not only do most judges refuse to examine the legality of the arrests made, "sometimes the judge himself misleads [foreigners] by holding out false promises", the report claims. Members of the mission attended several court hearings.

The three investigators noted that the situation was even worse in the prefectures. At one hearing, a foreigner protested that he could not be expelled because he was married to a French woman. Surprised, the judge questioned the representative of the administration and discovered he had the marriage certificate in his file but had not bothered to mention it to the judge or the defence.

The FIDH also found officials being heavy-handed with foreigners at detention centres, where none of the conditions provided for by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture is applied. Detainees' rights are not made clear, and there is no access to a telephone or to a lawyer.

The conclusion the mission draws from all this is "very significant for a country that holds itself out to be the cradle of human rights and a sanctuary".

Far from combating the propaganda of the extreme right, the report says, the government "is fostering xenophobia and making foreigners a scapegoat through various legislative and administrative measures".

And it adds: "Admittedly, it is becoming commonplace to note the discrepancy between the theory and reality of human rights in practically every nation. But the FIDH mission has to point out that the treatment meted out to one of society's most vulnerable minorities goes beyond the limits of what is acceptable."

(June 19)

# National Front's two faces

EDITORIAL

IN PUBLIC, the National Front (NF) still wheels out its customary arsenal of threats and intimidation, keeps controversy bubbling by making violent statements, takes repeated court actions and talks tough.

But behind the scenes, Jean-Marie Le Pen's party is being helpful and emollient not only in the electoral arena but also in neighbourhood associations. As a result the Front's following is growing steadily.

The NF's recent breakthrough in elections to tenants' associations of low-rent council flats and houses has rung alarm bells among those worried by the swelling rhetoric of intolerance and exclusion. However, the Front won just 17 of the 1,500 seats filled on June 15, which gives it only a toehold in these council housing tenants' associations.

Its presence will consequently be more symbolic than real. Even on boards of directors to which Front members have been elected, they will be in no position to impose the "national preference" for which they are clamouring.

What's more, the turnout at such elections is low, which limits their impact. But the fact that Le Pen's party has been fairly successful where it has chosen to field candidates confirms it is becoming more firmly established in housing estates, and this gives it hope for the future. These results are the fruit of a painstaking policy of operating at a neighbourhood level among people in difficulty. They feel abandoned and see the Front as their main champion as unemployment, insecurity and poverty compound their bewilderment and fuel their anger.

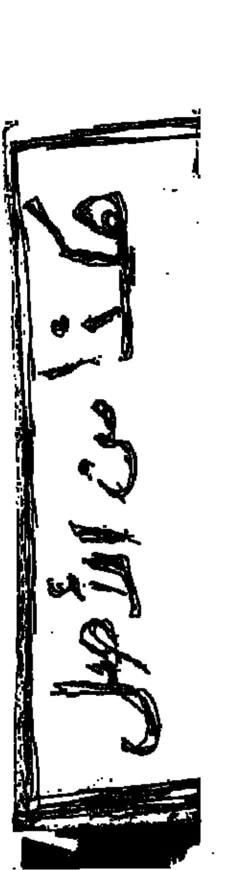
If the Bouches-du-Rhône *département*, among others, is affected by the NF's breakthrough, and the northern districts of Marseille give the party a warm welcome, it is not mere chance. They are areas that have lost their industrial base and are among many deserted by the left over the years, and which the Front is patiently working to win over.

Indeed, it is among former Socialist and Communist voters that the Front is now finding converts. As Patrick Perrineau, director of the Centre for French Political Studies, pointed out on June 15 to an audience of left- and right-wing political leaders in Châteauvallon, the old stamping grounds of the left are now "increasingly occupied by the National Front".

With the Front having become the leading party among manual workers, clerical employees and the jobless, only half of those who vote for Le Pen claim to be on the right.

Understandably, in order to be more in line with his voters, Le Pen now rejects his party's "extreme right" label. Taking liberties with the language, he prefers to claim his party is "neither of the right nor of the left". It is a measure of the size of the task ahead for the left to regain lost ground.

(June 20)



# In the clutches of the demon drug

**François Maspero**

NOTICIA DE UN SECUESTRO
Gabriel García Marquez
Grupo Editorial Norma
(Barcelona, Buenos Aires) 338pp

WHEN Gabriel García Marquez recently presented his new book, Noticia de un Secuestro (Chronicle Of A Hostage-Taking), to the Spanish press, he described it as "the toughest and saddest" book he had written. It had been "an agonising and unforgettable experience on a human level".

At a time when a new generation of Latin American writers claims to have turned its back on García Marquez's celebrated "magic realism", Colombia's winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature has returned to the investigative journalism of his early days as a writer.

What he proves in the process is that straightforward reporting can, through a painstaking account of the facts, based solely on the evidence of those involved, achieve the dimensions and starkness of Greek tragedy without relying on fictional embellishments or stylistic flourishes.

The idea of writing a "good piece of reportage" had long nagged García Marquez when a Bogotá journalist, Maruja Pachon, and her husband Alberto Villamizar, contacted him in 1993: two years earlier, Pachon had been kidnapped by drug traffickers, and she wanted him to tell the story of her six months' detention and her daily brush with death.

García Marquez very soon realised he could not restrict himself to her case alone: 10 people had been taken hostage along with her, and two of them were killed. His account would be meaningless unless he put it into the context of the ruthless trial of strength then going on between the Colombian government and the drug barons.

When César Gaviria became president in 1990, Colombia was the scene of a fight to the death. The government, pressurised by the United States, which wanted to search out and destroy the sources of the drug market, decided to dismantle the parallel state set up by the Medellin and Cali drug cartels, which had long been more powerful than the Colombian state itself.

The cartel bosses were forced to concede defeat as the government,



The body of drug baron Pablo Escobar lies on a stretcher after he was shot dead in Medellin in 1993

with US logistical support, carried out a series of military operations — which did not spare the civilian population. They were on the point of being arrested.

The Colombian government had promised to extradite drug traffickers facing charges in the US. It was a prospect that terrified the men who now referred to themselves as *los extraditables*: one of their number had just been sentenced in the US to life imprisonment (or more precisely 130 years).

As long as they remained on Colombian soil, however, they risked little. Like all good *mafiosi*, they had always been very careful not to get into trouble with the Colombian authorities.

Pablo Escobar, head of the Medellin cartel, came up with an answer to the extradition threat: blackmail. He kidnapped 10 people. Five of them had close ties with the government and belonged to the Bogotá élite, while the other five were part of a television crew accompanying reporter Diana Turbay, who had been fooled into thinking she was going to get an interview.

Escobar then negotiated on a tit-for-tat basis on behalf of all the *extraditables*: the hostages would be freed, and he and other leading drug bosses would give themselves up. In return, they would receive assurances that they would remain in a Colombian jail.

Those six months of negotiations — six months of purgatory for the hostages and their families — form the framework of García Marquez's narrative. His investigations are so painstaking, and his account so detailed, that at one point the reader worries about losing the thread.

But that never happens. In the opening pages the author generates a tension that never eases up. He alternates between the ordeal of the imprisoned hostages (odd-numbered chapters) and that of their nearest and dearest (even-numbered chapters). Despite his large cast of characters he manages, through this constant to-ing and fro-ing, to create a stifling, claustrophobic atmosphere.

THE hostages' only opening on the outside world is the little window of the television set that their guards keep on all the time. That is how they stay briefed about themselves, not only through news items and official statements, but through coded messages hidden in a snatch of dialogue in a television soap or the sermon of a priest.

For their families there is no escaping a constant obsession with the welfare of the hostages — an obsession that informs every minute of their lives and guides their every act.

On one side, then, García Marquez evokes the prisoners' daily lives, which oscillate between hope and mortal anxiety, and chronicles their cohabitation with guards who can be absurdly cruel one moment, and just as absurdly nice the next.

And mirroring them on the other side are the same hopes and fears as the search for a solution proceeds. There is a confrontation between the hostages' families, who are prepared to make any concessions asked of them, and the authorities, who do not want to give in.

The publisher has perfectly captured the atmosphere of the book by putting a chessboard on its cover: the whole affair is indeed like a game of chess, with its rules, long-pondered moves, traps and attempts at diversion. Gaviria and Escobar face each other across the chessboard, while strange pawns flit between them — respectable doctors and lawyers who also work for the drug traffickers.

Particularly memorable are the *muchachos*, the very young henchmen who are capable of killing or getting killed with quite extraordinary casualness. They are at once utterly amoral and fiercely devout, sporting medallions depicting the baby Jesus. It is a world barely glimpsed, but one which, far from being a world apart, may take over tomorrow if drug money continues to be the only means of survival for generations of people who have absolutely no prospects in life.

García Marquez describes all this with the familiar economy of means — very few adjectives, adverbs or repetitions — that lends his style its incomparable power. But does he really say everything?

Here the limitations of the chessboard become evident. García Marquez's narrative is in the form of a loop. It begins with Pachon's kidnapping: her diamond ring is ripped off her finger. It ends with the image of the freed Pachon: her ring has just been returned to her in an expensive case.

But what goes on outside that loop? We get not the slightest glimpse of Colombia itself, which has been blighted by the drug economy. Behind Escobar and his fellow top dogs there are a host of small producers, farmers who would be totally destitute were it not for the drug manna. We do not see them. Behind President Gaviria there is the iron fist of the US, which, if it cannot eradicate drug production, wants to control it.

In this sense, the book does not have a happy end. To be sure, Escobar eventually gives himself up. Later, after managing to turn his prison into the lap of luxury, he is shot dead during a massive gang showdown.

BUT WHO has taken over from Escobar, in Mexico or anywhere else? García Marquez — who, by the way, courageously defends the argument that only decriminalisation will end the drug problem — feels sympathy for Gaviria and his fight against the cartels, and this may explain why he does not pursue his analysis of the issue's deeper mechanisms further. His fascination with Escobar is also slightly disturbing.

The scene where Escobar gives himself up is superbly handled. The priest who has done the negotiating prepares to leave, his job completed. But Escobar's *muchachos* ask him to bless them. They all get down on their knees, and Escobar himself, with great dignity, does the same.

It has to be said that dignity is the main quality which emerges from this portrait of a man who seemed to possess the refinement of a gentleman in addition to machismo. Escobar may have been a criminal of the worst kind, but it could be that in García Marquez's eyes he was also the man who stood up to the US.

It is well known that García Marquez is a personal friend of Fidel Castro. One suspects that he may have detected, hidden away in the psyche of Escobar the drug baron, some of the Lider Maximo's virtues.

(June 7)

# Shining a light on the 'comfort women'

**Philippe Pons in Seoul**

THE fate of the "comfort women" — the euphemism used in Japan for some 200,000 Asian women, plus a few Westerners, who were used as sexual slaves by Japanese troops during the second world war — has been the subject of much comment ever since Japanese historians, burrowing in the imperial archives in 1992, revealed this blot on their country's history.

The cruel facts of the case and responsibility for them are only part of the truth, however. Women whose lives suddenly turned into a nightmare as the normal joys of youth were nipped in the bud are now, in their old age, torn between the urge to unburden themselves and the temptation to keep their secret and tiptoe out of the world that treated them so badly.

In his 1995 book, The Comfort Women: Japan's Brutal Regime Of Enforced Prostitution In The Second World War, George Hicks showed how the Japanese army organised prostitution — with the aim of reducing rape in occupied countries such as China — and how it went about recruiting candidates, notably in Korea. He thinks there are about 58,000 survivors today.

Byun Young-joo, a young South Korean director, has made Murmurs, a moving 90-minute documentary on the life of those women. She avoids politicising the issue, which is all the more remarkable because Koreans are notoriously prickly about Japan, their overlord from 1910 to 1945.

A showing of the film in Tokyo a month ago was disrupted by far-right extremists. Although Japan admits the facts, some deny that sexual slavery was a deliberate policy of the Japanese state.

"I came across the subject when reporting on prostitutes who cater for Japanese tourists on the island of Cheju [off the southern tip of Korea]," says Byun. "One of them told me she was in the profession to help pay for treatment for her mother, who had cancer of the uterus and who had been a 'comfort woman'."

Byun then visited a group of former "comfort women" living communally in Seoul. "At first they were hostile and suspicious — they didn't want to talk to the media, which had used them as an illustration of the kind of atrocities the Japanese were capable of, and then forgot about them. I visited them over a period of 14 months. We talked and drank together, and in the end we got on very well. One day, one of them handed me a few banknotes: 'For your film,' she said.

"I didn't want to make a film about relations between Japan and Korea, but about women as victims, whatever the identity of the aggressor, and show why we should be concerned today about their fate . . .

"Only one Korean cinema agreed to show the film, which was the first documentary ever to be released commercially in Korea. Without any promotion, it managed to draw 15,000 spectators, most of them students and more than 50 per cent women."

The brusque defensiveness of the women in the film reflects their desperate attempt to come to terms with their past. Some want neither compensation nor sympathy. All that Park Dore, aged 73, wants to do is "to leave this life with a goodbye".

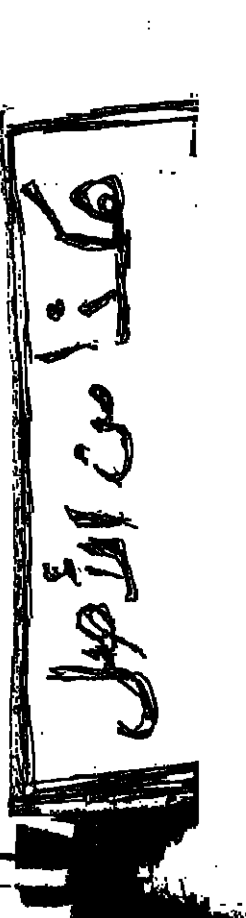
With apparent indifference, one woman describes what life was like for her at the age of 17: 20 clients a day, VD and attempted suicide. She remembers the songs she and her fellow "comfort women" used to sing in between clients.

Byun tracked down a group of 18 former Korean "comfort women" who had remained in China. "It took a year to negotiate with the authorities, because they didn't want to jeopardise their relations with Japan. They only allowed me to film three of them, as they thought the others were in too pathetic a condition," he says.

The resignation of the women in China contrasts with the apparent grittiness of those who returned to Korea.

(May 30)





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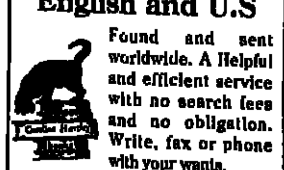
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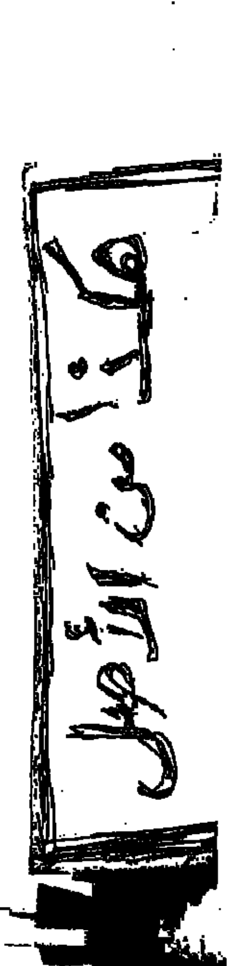
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# Whose skin is worth saving?

Controversy about the use of traps has brought Canada into conflict with Europe. **Malcolm Dean** met the tribes whose lives depend on the fur trade



A wolf is held in a steel leg-restraining trap PHOTOGRAPH: CUSTOM IMAGES

*THE* Indian elders of Cross Lake's Swampee Cree tribe assembled like they might have done over 300 years ago when they met their first Europeans. They sat in a dignified line ready to talk in turn. Their squaws sat apart with their tribe's goods: decorated moose-skin moccasins, beaver pelt boots, beaded earrings. The tribe live in prime trapping country: a mixture of pine ridges where martin, lynx and white fox roam, set amidst a lacework of lakes and rivers filled with beaver, muskrat and otter. Even last month, the lakes lay thick with ice after the longest and coldest winter since 1812.

French and English fur traders moved through this territory even before the Hudson Bay Company was given its exclusive right to organise a network of trading posts in 1670. Many early traders cross-bred with Indian women to produce a new native group: the Metis.

Now both Indians and Metis gathered to meet seven European journalists brought to Canada to talk to wild life officers and trappers about a trapping device, which threatens to bar all Canadian fur from European markets.

The early traders would not have recognised Cross Lake. There are simple timber houses, due to be improved from the compensation paid to the tribe for a hydro-electric scheme which flooded part of their land. There is a community centre, store, radio stations and landing strip for light aircraft. In the summer the lake has a lifeguard from 9am to 5pm.

With their baseball caps, winter shirts and thickly padded windjammers — two even wore sunshades — the 10 elders, at first glance, could have been any group of Canadians off to an ice hockey match. The only fur was on the craft table. Moreover they sat behind a row of microphones linked to the local radio station while other tribe members organised a video of the meeting.

Trapping too has changed. Two houses still had husky kennels but trappers now use skidoos, which are motorised, rather than sledges. Twenty years ago it could take two days to reach their trapping lines. Now it never takes more than a few hours. The old trapper spent weeks away from his family, surviving on meat, fish and forest food. Some still live that way but they take a radio with them to pick up messages relayed by the local radio station.

Yet trapping remains a hard life for the trapper — as well as the animals. The temperature dropped to minus 30 on 40 nights in the last winter. The cold improved the fur but increased the discomfort and difficulties. There are 80,000 trappers in Canada only half of whom are Indian. But thousands of other Indians, on reservations where half of all Indians still live, trap for their own needs. There are 1.2 million aboriginal people in Canada — 950,000 Indians, 190,000 Metis and 50,000 Inuit (eskimos) — representing 4 per cent of Canada's 30 million people. Few survive only on trapping. None gets rich. The most successful trapper in Manitoba last year, a Cree woman, earned US$13,000 but the national average was only $380.

Canada has been accused of unnecessary cruelty to animals by Europeans, yet paradoxically it is clearly committed to the welfare of wildlife through impressive programmes for protecting threatened species, introducing new wetlands for migrating wildfowl, and reintroducing species extinct to the region, such as the woodland buffalo.

To reinforce public support for wildlife, there are generous compensation schemes for damage caused by wildlife to farms or private property. Not far north of Cross Lake where the timber line stops is the famous denning area where Arctic polar bears, fresh off the Hudson iceflows, dig down in the summer to the permafrost. Some of the great white bears pass through Churchill, the small Hudson Bay seaport. If they cause trouble, as a few do, they are shot with a dope pellet and then winched by net and helicopter several hundred miles away. If they return, the same expensive procedure is followed. Only if they come back three times and cause serious trouble are they shot dead.

*YET UNLIKE* 60 other nations which have banned the leg trap, Canada still uses it. Instead of killing an animal, the spring-powered trap holds the animal between steel jaws until the trapper arrives. Animal welfare campaigners have documented the extensive injuries which can be caused, even to the point of animals gnawing off their limbs to escape. Britain prohibited the traps 30 years ago. The European Union agreed to ban the import of fur from any country which uses the trap, but has twice delayed this ban for fear of being overruled by the World Trade Organisation on the grounds of protectionism. Canada, which sells 70 per cent of its fur to Europe, complains the ban applies even to the nine species which Canada prohibits from being caught by the trap.

The cultural divide could not be wider. Canadian wildlife officers believe trapping is an important tool for maintaining a sustainable ecology. They point to a rise in the numbers of beaver since the drop in fur prices led to a decline in trapping — a rise which is threatening woodlands and changing Canadian eco-systems with their widespread dams. They accuse Europeans of hypocrisy, noting the Dutch trap 400,000 muskrat every year for dyke protection. Beavers and muskrats would still be trapped as pests in Canada, even if their pelts could no longer be sold.

They defend the legtrap on the grounds that it is only used for five land species which are too big to be killed outright (coyote, fox, wolf, lynx, bobcat) or for water species (beaver, muskrat) which are killed by drowning. They point to new trigger mechanisms which reduce the chances of a wrong species being caught by the trap; and hard rubber padding which has replaced steel jaws in new traps. They note the millions spent at a research centre in Alberta developing more humane traps in the past 10 years — far more than any other country. Yet even this centre, which has approved 10 new killing devices, has found only one leg restraining trap (for raccoons) to be humane. They deny the legtrap is more cruel than snares used in Scandinavia and France. They accuse the animal welfare lobby of ignoring the cruelty of nature: "We do not pull animals limb from limb like predators. It is not in the trappers' interest to have a spoilt pelt." The officers say that they believe in animal welfare, not animal rights.

You do not need to look far to see the holes in some of these arguments. The wildlife service's own statistics expose another illogicality: if legtraps are so crucial, why is it that only 35 per cent of fox, coyote and lynx are caught using them and a mere 10 per cent of wolves?

The Indian elders concentrated on Western double standards. One of their women trappers explained: "I went to Winnipeg zoo. I saw birds in cages and animals in pens and then thought of our animals in our wilderness with their freedom and fresh food." An elder, who had fought with the Canadian army in the second world war said: "I fought to protect your liberty now I would like you to protect mine. This land is our wilderness. We do not tell Europeans how to treat their cattle, sheep or pigs. Please do not tell us how we should treat our wildlife."

The most awkward moral question facing Europeans is where the concept of sustainability stops. Does it include culture or stop at ecology? If it includes culture then the European case is not as straightforward as is made out. In the words of the Cross Lake chief: "Trapping is part of our heritage. We have hunted and trapped for thousands of years. We have not misused it. We need it for fur, food and income. It is an integral part of our aboriginal culture, transferring skills and values from generation to generation. Please respect that."

# Citizen of everywhere

**OBITUARY**
Gesualdo Bufalino

*THE LEAST* provincial of modern European writers, Gesualdo Bufalino, who has died after a car accident at the age of 75, was also among the least known outside his native Sicily. The perspective of contemporary Italian fiction embraced by most British readers is a narrow one, dominated by Italo Calvino and Umberto Eco, and the space allotted to Bufalino in a small handful of translated works is marginal.

Among those who continue to scan this particular horizon for talents with rather more substance to them than those of clowns and mountebanks, Bufalino's stature appears unassailable, that of a doggedly original novelist and short story writer whose unique profile among writers in Italian became the sharper because of his reluctance to go touting for glamour and celebrity on the Italian literary scene.

His *raison d'être* and continual point of reference as an artist was Sicily, in whose ancient traditions of the word, stretching back via Pirandello and Verga to medieval poets and Greek dramatists, he firmly located himself throughout a life spent mostly in the small town of Comiso in the south of the island.

The son of a poor blacksmith, he passed a happy childhood there, learning, as he later noted, how to be "a citizen of everywhere" with the aid of a tiny collection of illustrated books, including a battered old atlas.

Not until he was 30, however, and established in his chosen profession



Gesualdo Bufalino, a Sicilian writer of unassailable stature

as a teacher, did he begin to write, completing a first novel Diceria Dell'Untore, which languished for more than 30 years before publication. Set in a military hospital and investigating the theme of mortality in a style of sonorous elegance, it placed him at once among the modern masters of Italian prose. It was later translated as The Plague Sower.

Sicilian writing has never had any trouble with absorbing and distilling material from the past, doubtless because shadows of the past lie so inexorably across every aspect of life in the island, and Bufalino, who defined his native land as "a difficult place, a paradise disguised as hell, a hell disguised as paradise", turned as naturally as Giuseppe Tommasi di Lampedusa had done in The Leopard to the ambiguous world of the Risorgimento for the inspiration of a subsequent novel, Le Menzogne Della Notte (Night's Lies) published in 1988.

Here he imagined the conversation, on the evening before they face execution, of a group of dissidents involved in a conspiracy against the Bourbon government of King Ferdinand. Each of the quartet is recognisably located as a type within the period setting, whether as a soldier, a disaffected aristocrat, a student intellectual or a revolutionary poet, yet their discourse and interaction transcend anything as limiting as the label "historical novel".

Once again it was the vibrant beauty of Bufalino's style, underpinning the characters' passionate engagement with the smallest details of the existence they were about to leave behind, which won him critical acclaim, this time in the form of the Premio Strega, Italy's most coveted fiction award.

Fame, having arrived so late, made little difference to the generally quiet tenor of his life as author and teacher. Other writings in translation gradually gained him admirers beyond Italy, especially the novel Argo Il Cieco (Blind Argus) the implicit paradox of whose title embodies the work's inherent playfulness, and a collection of stories, L'Uomo Invaso, translated as The Keeper Of Ruins.

The latter offers an ideal display, both of Bufalino's versatility as a writer and of the subtle tones within his prismatic vision of the Sicilian backgrounds which nourished him.

There are affectionate parodies of medieval and Renaissance romance styles, clever stabs at urban realism, sly pastiches of Calvino's manner and sidelong glances at the world of the *giallo*, the detective story which forms the basis of many Italians' sole encounter with fiction.

Not for nothing in L'Uomo Invaso does Bufalino remind us of another great novelist of contemporary Sicily, Leonardo Sciascia, whose friend he was and from whom he quite clearly absorbed much in terms of craftsmanship and narrative technique. Both men deplored the stagnation and corruption within Italy's political culture as much as they lamented the loss of cultural identity by which rapid social and technological change seemed to threaten the immemorial rhythms of Sicilian life.

"Half a century has been enough", wrote Bufalino, "to distort the image of a rural civilisation, to degrade the dialect, to smear with the even gloss of modernity objects, ceremonies, clothes, customs and feelings."

Bufalino's work is not, to any self-conscious degree, a celebration of that Sicilianness he always needed to acknowledge within himself. An inheritance from this sturdiest of Italian literature's regional strains is reflected instead in his intransigent independence of viewpoint and method as a novelist, and in the simple fact that, notwithstanding his debt to Sciascia and possibly also as a short story writer to Pirandello, he has no obvious beginnings except in the opulent, sometimes sinister, suggestiveness of his island landscape.

If he emerges, within the compass of a small number of published works, as one of Italy's most accomplished writers, then it is worth recalling that he achieved that distinction by staying where he was.

He is survived by his wife Giovanna.

**Jonathan Keates**

Gesualdo Bufalino, novelist, born 1920; died June 14, 1996





**Letter from Châtaignerale** Peter Graham

# French beef about the Brits

*IN THIS* part of the Auvergne it is often hard to get BBC's Radio 4. But the other day reception was just about good enough for me to tune in to that excellent early-morning programme, Farming Today. My drowsiness quickly turned to anger as, through the crackle, I heard an expert on BSE say that some of those robber barons of agribusiness (aka animal-feed manufacturers) had been putting not only rendered sheep in their rations for ruminants, but feather meal (no prizes for guessing where that comes from), clay and sawdust. They could get away with this because UK labelling legislation was lax enough to let them name ingredients generically (minerals, cellulose, etc.) rather than specifically.

What with everything else — John "Biggles" Major teaching those foreign chappies a thing or two with his "war cabinet", policy of non-co-operation and "charm offensive", and the recent revelation that the robber barons had doubled their exports of possibly contaminated feed to France a year after its sale had been banned in the UK — I was beginning to feel ashamed to be British.

France has suffered almost as much as Britain from a BSE crisis that was not of its own making. The butchery trade as a whole has been hit by a 30 per cent drop in sales of beef and veal, while prices paid to farmers have plummeted.

Most of France's 20-odd cases of BSE can be traced to imports of British animals. The disease has been kept in check here for four main reasons: whole herds are systematically culled as soon as an outbreak of foot-and-mouth, brucellosis or BSE occurs; there is full compensation for slaughtered animals; the origin of all cattle can be traced by a comprehensive marking system; and the proportion of meat and bone meal used in cattle rations has been tiny.

Curiously, people round here tend not to bring up the subject of BSE spontaneously in conversation — perhaps they are reluctant to offend. But they answer readily when asked if they blame the British for the *vache folle* crisis. "No, it's all the fault of the Common Agricultural Policy," said one farmer. "Europe has been an unmitigated disaster." That struck me as a bit rich coming from someone who gets a Christmas-stockingful of subsidies from Brussels (for calves, for cows with calves, for being a hill farmer, for growing grass).

What did my local butcher think? "It's business as usual, though brains, sweetbreads and liver don't move as quickly as they used to," he said. "But there's no real problem with beef because customers know where my meat comes from."

He gets all his beef from nearby farms. The cattle are mostly Salers, a local breed that sports a curly reddish-brown coat and has the speed and pointed horns of the bulls they let loose in the streets of Pamplona. The animals are fed on a diet of grass, wheat, rye and beet, most of which is grown on the farms they live on.

Did the butcher not think the attitude of the British government, ranting against the EU but insisting that it fund 70 per cent of compensation to be paid to UK farmers, was disgracefully cynical? "Not really," he said. "Do you think our lot would have behaved any better? But I'll tell you one thing: I didn't used to be an ecologist, but I'm fast becoming one."

I visited one of the larger farms in the area (which are small by UK standards). Its owner thought that in the long run the farming industry was facing Armageddon. He has already lost 100,000 francs ($20,000) in turnover following the escalation of the BSE scare since March. The Italians who used to buy his *broutards* (400kg young steers) for finishing in Italy have stopped doing so because of the bottleneck in sales there.

Was he not enraged by the behaviour of the British robber barons? "All I can say is that the animals can't have grown very fast on a diet of clay and sawdust — perhaps they added the clay as a condiment? But do you think we're any better here in France? I can assure you that the stocks of frozen British beef held in store by French supermarkets are not going to end up on the rubbish dump. There have already been cases of 'British beef' stamps being removed from carcasses."

But didn't he think Major had been acting up like a petulant schoolboy? Wasn't the whole BSE crisis a fitting epitaph to "*thatchérisme*"?

"OK, you're an island and you drive on the left and you did burn Joan of Arc, so I suppose one could say life would have been easier for us if we'd left 'perfidious Albion' out of Europe," he said with a wicked grin.

# Dowser offers solution to long summer

**_ARMED_ with a forked whale bone as a divining rod, Edwin Taylor (pictured right) earnestly paced the car park behind the soft drinks company in Featherstone, West Yorkshire *writes Peter Hetherington.***

**"I've found one, 50 metres down," he announced as the rod dipped abruptly. "Should be plenty there for you."**

**An incredulous works engineer rushed forward to mark the spot with a big white cross. "You've got to believe it, haven't you?" smiled Graham Ladlow. "We'd like to get to this tomorrow but, realistically, it could take us four months or so."**

**By acting as a water dowser for local firms, Mr Taylor has brought hope to parts of drought-stricken Yorkshire, where reservoirs are still 35 per cent below capacity.**

**The Featherstone company, which produces 130,000 two-litre bottles a day and supplies supermarket chains, brought him in when it decided that drastic action was needed to safeguard supplies and guarantee consistency.**

**"Our problem is the changing quality, varying between hard water and alkaline — it tastes different, depending on the day," said Mr Ladlow. "This could be the answer."**

**Since last year's water emergency, when Yorkshire Water had to replenish reservoirs with tanker convoys from Northumbria, Mr Taylor, aged 77, has never known such demand for his services. He began as a water dowser 40 years ago on his farm near Shotley Bridge in Northumberland. "I suppose it's something you're born with, a sixth sense," he said. "You get this sensation in your arms, muscles twitch, and that's it."**

**Ralph Barton, a water analyst from Wakefield, who advises many companies including the soft drinks factory, said he had been won over. "I didn't believe it would work, but he's never been wrong. There's an air of mysticism — a bit like faith healing."**

**At Huddersfield, Khalid Pervaiz has connected his textile company to a supply found by Mr Taylor, and now only uses Yorkshire Water as an emergency back-up. "He found me water, loads of it, and it has saved us lots of money," said Mr Pervaiz, who needs 77,000 gallons a day. "At first I just couldn't believe it, but some people seem to be gifted."**



PHOTOGRAPH: JUSTIN SLEE

# A Country Diary

**John Vallins**

*SOMERSET*: There was little evidence of gloom as Somerset's agricultural community set out its stall at the Bath and West Show. Beyond the glistening Porsches, Range-Rovers and space-age farm machinery, and the tents full of waxed coats, saddlery and jodhpurs, were the Dartmoor pony class, the cheese pavilion, the shepherds' flockmasters and the parade of goats.

The great, champion Charolais bulls, combed and cosseted, sprawled, untroubled by EU regulations, on beds of clean straw. There were pigs of immense size, superior beasts and stars of the show circuit, yawning at the boredom of it all. But it was the pig-handlers' competition that specially caught our eye.

Each man, armed with a wooden shield in his left hand and a short batten or crook in his right, attempted to guide his pig through a slalom of stakes and a fabric tunnel, over a ramp and a jump, into a pen, and then along the finishing straight.

There was a Hickstead-style commentary and time-faults were awarded. One handler, identified as Simon, almost straddled his pig, shielding its vision from distraction on the left, and nudging its rear and right side with the crook. "You don't argue with Simon," said the commentator. Most of the handlers adopted the cautious tactic of crawling through the tunnel behind the pig, but one sent his pig in and strolled alongside. His over-confidence was penalised when the pig contrived to turn in the restricted space and emerge at the start end to loud applause.

The general impression was of something like an old-fashioned derby day. The commentator revealed that the pig-handler was "the Reverend Simon". A pig-handling West Country parson seemed just right alongside the whirring sheep-shearers and clanging blacksmiths.

**Notes & Queries** Joseph Harker

**_WHAT_ is the evolutionary advantage of a bee dying once it has stung an attacker? Why have not have evolved in the same way as the wasp, living to sting another day?**

*BEE'S* sting is mainly used to sting other insects, in particular other bees and wasps trying to steal honey from the hive. Usually when the sting is used in this way the bee does not die; it is able to extract its sting from the brittle outer layer of the other insect. In contrast, bees sting mammals (mainly mice trying to get in the hive, or beekeepers) very rarely, but die because the sting gets stuck in the tough, leathery mammalian skin.

For something to cause an evolutionary change it must confer a significant advantage or disadvantage on the survival and success of the animal. An individual worker bee is just one of tens of thousands in the hive, and does not itself breed (only the queen and drones do that). Presumably the disadvantage of the loss of a few sterile workers has so little effect on the hive's success that no evolutionary change has resulted. — *Harvey Rutt (beekeeper), Southampton, Hampshire*

*I FEEL* sure that a bee dies after stinging its attacker in order to prevent a future life of futility racked in regrets, guilt, or fear of reprisal.— *Mick Wilson, Norwich*

**_WHAT_ was the last recorded instance of a duel being fought with seconds, at 10 paces and using pistols?**

*A CONFRONTATION* involving Marcel Proust, the author of A La Recherche Du Temps Perdu, and his literary contemporary Jean Lorrian, took place in France at Bois de Meudon as recently as February 6, 1897.

The clash was occasioned by Lorrian accusing Proust of plagiarism and referring to him as "one of those pretty little society boys who have succeeded in becoming pregnant with literature". Two shots were fired, but — to quote Le Figaro — nobody was hurt and the seconds declared that the dispute was ended. (Source: Fights, Feuds And Heartfelt Hatreds, by Philip Kerr, 1992.) — *Bob Hays, Ripponden, Halifax*

*IN* December 1971 a duel was fought between a Uruguayan field marshal and a general, after the former had dubbed his colleague "a socialist". The protagonists met at dawn in a Montevideo public park and, from 25 paces, fired 38 rounds at each other. Neither was hurt. According to the field marshal's second, the men did not put on their glasses before commencing the back-to-back walk. (Source: The Book Of Heroic Failures, Stephen Pile, 1979.) — *Dominic Gould, Hull*

**_THE WORD_ "cleave" has two opposite meanings — either to stick together or split apart. Are there any other words that do the same thing?**

*IN CRICKET*, a captain can put a bowler on for a "spell", or period of overs which he will bowl for, and then take him off for a "spell" or rest when he gets tired. — *Rainer Gibbons, Auckland, New Zealand*

## Any answers?

**_MY SALAMI_ sausage snack lists as its ingredients: pork, salt, spices, dextrose, E621, maltodextrin, preservative and sodium nitrite. Then it states that the product is "Not less than 100 per cent meat". How can this be? — *Andrew Rowley, Watford, Herts***

**_WHEN_ a fly alights on a window pane, repeated slaps, taps and brushing from the other side rarely dislodge it. Is the fly unable to see through glass or is it contemptuously ignoring the threat, realising that it cannot be harmed? — *Ken Norman, Bowness-on-Solway, Cumbria***

Answers should be e-mailed to weekly@guardian.co.uk, faxed to 0171/44171-242-0985, or posted to The Guardian Weekly, 75 Farringdon Road, London EC1M 3HQ.

# Escape to Alcatraz

CINEMA
**Derek Malcolm**

"GREENLIGHT the seal incursion," says a top military man when it is discovered, in Michael Bay's The Rock, that a distinguished Vietnam veteran has gone bananas and taken over Alcatraz Island, imprisoning a group of goggling tourists on the way. And for a brief moment, I thought there was a really original plot-turn in this first of the summer's big popoorn movies.

The seals I naively expected, doubtless carrying mini nuclear weapons and honking threateningly, turned out to be a crack unit of Navy SEALs, led by the veteran Sean Connery, a former SAS operative whose job it is to lead them through the bowels of the old fort to rescue the hostages.

"I've been in jail for longer than Nelson Mandela, so maybe you want me to run for president," he tells Nic Cage's FBI biochemical weapons expert when dragged in chains out of his cell to accomplish the mission. And his long white hair not only makes him look as if he's capable of parting the waters, but testifies to the fact that he was thought too dangerous even for a haircut.

Apparently, the offence involved Connery's making off with J Edgar Hoover's most closely guarded secrets, though we are not told whether or not it was something to do with that peculiar gentleman's transvestite tendencies.

Anyhow, he's the only one who managed to escape from Alcatraz and survive, and he knows the place like the back of his horny hand. Which is just as well, since the army veteran (Ed Harris) who has taken over the joint was the greatest battalion commander in Vietnam and is likely to be a formidable opponent. He's turned very nasty because the US government has consistently failed to acknowledge the contributions of the soldiers lost in various covert operations down the years.

Bereft of his beloved wife — on her gravestone are the simple words "his wife" — he now threatens San Francisco with rockets full of chemical weapons if something isn't done for the lost heroes' families. It's the usually desk-bound Cage's job to disarm the weapons before the whole population is decimated by the poison gas.

We are here in the territory of a hundred other absurd action movies, including some of those made by the same team of Don Simpson and Jerry Bruckheimer, like Top Gun and Beverly Hills Cop. One half-expects Jean-Claude Van Damme to pop up over the Alcatraz parapets. But the vital difference is that Messrs Connery, Cage and Harris are in the cast, and some halfway-decent lines have to be manufactured for them. There also have to be stunts to blow what's left of your mind afterwards.

The stunts are indeed pretty good, though the violence involved is a bit offputting. Quite a lot of SEALs and most of Harris's mercenaries, offered a million dollars each to participate, meet some very nasty deaths. And Connery, though well into his sixties, is asked, doubtless with the aid of somewhat younger stuntmen, to do some fairly difficult feats, including handling a car chase that seems to destroy half of San Francisco without harming his new hairdo, given him by a sadly parodic gay hairdresser.

By way of compensation for the derring-do, he and Harris get to quote Jefferson and Oscar Wilde at each other at one point, though Connery is unforgivably accused of being an Englishman elsewhere and simply has to grin and bear it.

The vital ingredient of tension is provided by the fact that the president has to take a very nasty call. Will he bomb to perdition Connery, Cage, the remaining SEALs and the hostages to save San Francisco, or will Harris, a jolly decent sort underneath his paranoia, finally relent if his bluff is called?

One has to admit that this noisy, thumping conflation of hardware and hard men on the whole does what is required of it for 136 minutes, and that, dedicated to the late Don Simpson, who died of drink and drugs, it provides a suitable epitaph. The pair knew what the public wanted and once again have given it to them in spades.

But I have to admit that without the saving presence of Connery, in particular, who can generally make a tidy little something out of nothing and whose sheer presence would dignify a worse film than this, we wouldn't have had all that much to crow about. He, Cage and Harris know exactly what they can and can't do under the circumstances, and their judgment is praiseworthy.

But don't expect miracles of art or wit. Just loads of production artifice expensively laid out before us, and a fast pace punctuated by quips that sometimes get down to the level of "Zeus's butthole", but once or twice betray a decently literate turn of phrase.

THE REST of the week's films include one remarkable work, Hirokazu Koreeda's Maborosi, a debut which won the Chicago Festival's top prize last year and also the Special Jury Award at Venice. This is the story of a young woman whose husband unaccountably walks under a train, and who thereafter feels that tragedy is certain to stalk her life. She leaves Osaka and marries again, this time to a decent man who lives in a small fishing town. But even there her fears remain.

The film is superb to look at but extremely slow, almost like a gradually evolving painting. It watches the woman's world with a patient eye that takes in a mass of small detail, adding it with almost infallible skill to the extraordinary atmosphere created by the film's mood and soundtrack.

Clearly it won't be for everybody, and some will feel it's like watching paint dry. But those who appreciate the films of Taiwan's Hou Hsiau-Hsien, whose composer Chen Ming-Chang provides the sparing score, will see the connections. This is a remarkably sustained debut, and quite magical if you let it get to you.

Glastonbury — The Movie is a cheap and cheerful summation of a typical Glastonbury Festival — hardly Woodstock, but in tune with the event itself, right down to the stinky lavs and the almost perceptible smell of a certain weed that doesn't grow in the ground there.

Produced and directed by Robin Mahoney, Matthew Salkeld and William Beaton, the film is the first to be completed with National Lottery funds, and only killjoys would object to the use of our hard-earned gambling money.



Regal house of horror . . . Richard E Grant and Susan Lynch

# Right royal trials of life

TELEVISION
**Nancy Banks-Smith**

"THIS IS a true story. Everything you are about to see really happened and almost all you are about to hear was actually said. It happened in Britain 200 years ago." At this point a perfectly honest narrator would have added: "Sort of."

**Royal Scandal** (BBC1) was the slightly Blackadderish story of Princess Caroline (Susan Lynch) who married the Prince of Wales (Richard E Grant), a man with an old devotion to another lady. The problem with the obvious, mischievous parallel is that Caroline — friendly, fat, gaudy, fond of children and fond, as her footman put it, of fucking — is obviously the spitting image not of our own dear Di but of the Duchess of York. Max Beerbohm said famously of her, "Fate wrote her a most tremendous tragedy and she played it in tights." She was one of nature's principal boys.

The fun of royalty is you never know what you are going to get out of the bran tub. In a long line of suet puddings, the Prince Regent was an astonishing soufflé. The man was an artist and I'm not sure that's a plus in a king. Look at Nero. He himself was an exquisite creation and, latterly, a great credit to his corsetière.

As Ian Richardson, suave as suede socks, said: "He spent £20 a week on lavender water, rose water, elderflower water, jasmine pomatum, orange pomatum, eau de cologue, essence of bergamot, eau de miel angleterre, milk of roses, huile antique and oil of jessmine." Caroline, on the other hand, a slapdash soul, could be smelled coming round corners without any artifical help at all. It is unwise to buy a princess by mail order.

Considering how princes and producers run up debts like staircases, Royal Scandal, produced and directed by Sheree Folkson, was a striking instance of elegant economy. Take one magnificent black-and-white floor on which the principals can move in aggressive gambits, a small fistful of actors and light it with love. For instance, hearing that his attempt to divorce Caroline had failed, George's head was silhouetted like a postage stamp against the glare of the celebratory fireworks. Caroline was always wildly popular with the people.

The trials of life, as Queen Victoria — always very sound on such points — remarked, *begin* with marriage. At the wedding, George was drunk and sobbed loudly. (Heavens, how one regrets the lack of television!) On the wedding night he was drunker and crashed to the floor incapable. Princess Charlotte was something of a miracle baby.

The Royal Mews has a collection of carriages in which royal brides, with little English and less idea what they were in for, jolted for months over the rutted roads of Europe. I found it affecting.

George left Caroline immediately. After the initial wound — "I do not see how I shall bear the loneliness" — she fought back. She was related to Frederick the Great, who would hold his state trumpeters out at arm's length, one in each hand, until they had finished their trumpeting.

She gallivanted around the world having, one must say, a rollicking time. If you like that sort of thing. She attended the Grand Duke's hunting ball wearing half a pumpkin on her head and she entered Jerusalem on an ass with some 200 followers. She was recklessly rackety and regularly newsworthy. During her trial for adultery ("She was with a naval officer in a very compromising position." "Was the man involved an admiral?" "Oh, I don't know, he wasn't wearing his hat") the Times doubled its circulation.

She died very bravely a few weeks after being turned away from her own coronation. Probably cancer. Possibly heartbreak.

And the moral of this is a queen can never take a king.

Royal Scandal was perfectly enjoyable in a way the ponderous and ambitious **Cold Lazarus** (Channel 4) was not. This was Potter throwing his inkpot at the devil or, as he would say, Rupert Murdoch. He was a good hater but it was not a very good shot.

Television is intimate and internal. When at last the tormented head exploded in ice and fire, we rushed, as it were, into the arms of Potter's heart. All the memories of his youth from which he drew dramatic strength for 40 years.

Potter has been entwined with my life ever since, oh, he was a TV critic. This was not at the time considered a serious or onerous job. The editor questioned me closely after he left. "Have you a TV set?" I had. I got the job. Everything on television — drama, comedy, soaps, serials — was about to explode like a star. He was part of that big bang.

# Choreography that skates over thin ice

DANCE
**Judith Mackrell**

CHRISTOPHER DEAN had never made a ballet before but he is Britain's most famous choreographer and, whatever artistic risk the English National Ballet might have taken in commissioning his work Encounters, the bank must surely have cheered them on.

Given that the piece is autobiographical and that it's set to classic songs by Paul Simon, surely his move from ice to stage could not fail.

Certainly, the opening section, which is set to a recording of The Sound Of Silence and has Dean reincarnated as the dancer Thomas Edur, looks good. Trapped by an ice-blue spotlight and by the swelling of an invisible audience's cheers, Edur is poignantly credible as Dean the vulnerable star. He possesses greatness all of his own, plus he can look anguished without self-pity. The ballet is probably unthinkable without him.

All the other characters in Dean's life then come on and dance (parents, stepmother, two wives, and of course Jayne Torville) and you see at a glance how successfully Dean has replicated the woozy lifts and turns that make ice dance so seductive. The bodies dip and soar around each other.

He also insists on a genuine emotional directness between characters, so when his dancers stare at each other they know what they are looking for and what they are feeling.

His problem is that dancers need steps to get from one climax to another, they can't just glide across unresisting ice, and Dean has too small a vocabulary of floor-bound moves to develop his choreography interestingly. He rarely uses the dancers' feet.

He also misreads the fact that effects which can be writ large in a skating rink feel monstrously crude on stage; like Edur meeting his mother, after a long absence, to the lyrics of Mother And Child Reunion.

The duet for him and Jayne is lovely, light, unabashed pleasure, and the number 50 Ways To Leave Your Lover, which shows his first wife insinuating herself into his life and then getting sorted by Agnes Oakes as a radiantly bitchy Wife No 2, is downright funny. The audience loved every minute.

The other première in the programme, Matthew Hart's Blitz, was cancelled because of a last-minute injury. In its place was Patrick Lewis's Unrequited Moments, in which Lisa Pavane dances with Dmitri Gruzdyev while wishing she could dance with Greg Horsman. He's unfortunately already dancing with Monica Perego. Pavane sends smouldering glances his way while trying to dodge Gruzdyev's kisses. He gazes at her reproachfully while Perego erects invisible wire fences round her man.

Lewis makes fluent, spacious dance out of all this but the politeness of the work is deadly. He cites MacMillan as his inspiration, but MacMillan knew that to portray love and obsession you had to dance dirty.





# Those monumental objects of desire

For Claes Oldenburg, day-to-day items must be inflated. But for Stephan Balkenhol, the everyday is quite strange enough, writes **Adrian Searle**

The scale of the century . . . Claes Oldenburg's Giant Fagends lives up to its name at 1.32m x 2.44m x 2.44m. But Stephan Balkenhol's Large Man (below) impresses with its utter normality

THE SWEDISH-BORN American sculptor Claes Oldenburg has had an enormous influence on the sculptors who have come in his wake, from Jeff Koons to Julian Opie, from Richard Wentworth to Rebecca Horn. A retrospective anthology of his work fills the Hayward Gallery in London until August 18. His career, spanning the past 40 years, began as a funny, clunky, joyful celebration of the everyday: the three-pin plug, blown-up into a huge, soft punchbag which dangles by a rope from the ceiling; a kapok-stuffed vinyl light switch sagging from the wall; a massively oversized vacuum cleaner; a man-sized apple core; papier-maché pies, soft drum-kits and a drooping clarinet.

Much of Oldenburg's work bequeaths a cartoon-like life to inanimate objects, and has aimed to make the modern world a friendlier, more benign and sexier place. Why, so often, do I remain unmoved, and even irritated by his work?

Oldenburg's sculptural game has been to transpose objects from one scale to another, from one material to another, and to make monuments of the disregarded. He blows things up out of all proportion to the natural scale of things, making epic icons of the everyday. A classic American Pop artist, Oldenburg began by taking an almost Abstract Expressionist stance towards the world of quotidian objects, but stripped away the heroics and portentousness of Action Painting in favour of an almost slapstick approach towards materials and subjects.

The rubbish and detritus of the street, advertising signs and shop-window goodies provided his subjects from the first. He began in the early 1960s by fabricating his sculptures from cheap, throwaway materials, or by simply displaying found materials. He saw ray guns in bits of litter and trash, and made taxonomical arrangements of lumps of stone, shreds of cloth, fragments of trodden-down litter and grommets of metal. He found monuments in shoes, ice-cream cones and Pepsi-Cola signs, and poetry in almost everything from underpants to book-matches, over-sized clothes draped over a chair, a sewing machine.

The gallery for Oldenburg became a thrift-store of drooling, battered, gaudily repainted versions of real objects. He went on to produce giant raisin-bread loaves, stuffed and stitched sculptures of toilets, washstands, electrical goods and musical instruments — many of which are on show here. That nothing was too lowly to escape his attention may have been shocking in the 1960s, but now, at the Hayward, it just looks like regular art.

At best, his work is generous, accomplished and witty. At worst it is only big. Since he began Disneyfying the landscape in the 1970s with huge public sculptures — giant book-matches for a street in Barcelona, a pickaxe buried in the earth at Kassel, a massive pair of upended binoculars as the entrance to the Chiat/Day Building in Venice, California, in 1991 — Oldenburg, in collaboration with his partner Coosje Van Bruggen and with the active complicity of architect Frank Gehry, has become part of the urban blight which he had once seen to reclaim as poetry.

More successful perhaps are the smaller versions of these bombastic nullities on show here, and better by far the Oldenburg of the 1960s with his sculptural still-lifes. The urban asides — floppy saxophones, a gaggle of smoked-out cigarette butts, the beefed-up flatulent burgers — say something about American culture, and the dumbing of America, rather than becoming part of its gargantuan, inflated banality.

Oldenburg's work, for all its superficial lightness, has become baroque and grandiose. It provokes questions about taste, about our place in the world and our relation to things. It questions the relationship between a supposed natural order and the artificial environment we have constructed for ourselves. But even where Oldenburg plays games with symbolic order, the hierarchies of value which we place on objects and their meanings, he has come to do so at the expense of a consideration of human scale. Personally, I don't want to live in a cartoon, or in a land littered with the traces of unseen giants.

The everyday is strange enough. This seems to be at the heart of German sculptor Stephan Balkenhol's work, beautifully installed in the first one-person show to be held at London's Saatchi Gallery (until the end of July). There they stand, the figures on their plinths. Standing alone or facing one another, caught forever in their mute, self-conscious gestures. They do not move. Immobile and silent and standing in the clean light, caught in the act of looking and being looked at; being seen and being described.

They are people like you and me, everyday people in their ordinary clothes: dark jeans, a yellow shirt, a blue dress; pale skin, a touch of lipstick, black hair, brown, blonde. People clothed and people naked in the glare of the day. Hand on hip, arms crossed, hands dangling limp to their sides.

Bakenhol, aged 39, is a woodcarver. He carves figures and portraits of no one; huge heads, faces in relief, animals and people on plinths. He sculpts everyday devils and angels, three naked graces, an ordinary mermaid, a group of sullen bears. Why should they interest us, these anonymous, inexpressive nobodies? Returning our gaze, looking through us and beyond us, they command us with their familiar, human volumes. Up close, the rough-chipped, hacked-at facets in the timber, the unshaven splinters, chisel marks and places where the sculptor's tools have bitten hard into the wood, the incidental splits in the timber and the matt, washed-on colour reveal a plainness, a complete frankness and spareness of technique. These are, after all, only sculptures, carved from single blocks, figure and plinth entire, all of a piece, a job of work.

BALKENHOL'S sculptures are a return to lifelike, figurative, polychrome sculpture. Yet he never tries to trick us with verisimilitude, never attempts to overawe us with heroism, overt drama or theatricality, never for one moment disguises his sculptures with polish. The figures are what they are — rough approximations, affect-less stand-ins of the living. This, rather than being their weakness, is their strength.

Balkenhol's sculptures impress us mostly with their utter normality. Sometimes he sculpts little toy-like figures, at other times heads on a monumental scale, or towering figures. Even his more fantastical sculptures — a diminutive woman with a cow's head, or a man with a devil's tail and a winged angel, who stand between a little wooden globe of the world, are tied to the familiar. We could be them, they could be us.

Balkenhol's work, disguising its complexity and sophistication with its immediacy, approachability and lack of pretension, is a thoroughly European antidote to Oldenburg's public sculpture. Size isn't everything. Instead, it's all a matter of scale, space and place.

**Review** Theatre

# History in the making

Who Shall Be Happy?
**Michael Billington**

THE TEST of any history play is whether it both pins down the past and reverberates in the present. Trevor Griffiths's Who Shall Be Happy? — presented by Belfast's Mad Cow Productions at London's Bush theatre — triumphantly passes that test, dealing both with Danton's last days and the plight of the popular revolutionary in oppressive times.

It is set in a Paris prison-cell in 1794: the height of the Great Terror. The prisoner, Danton, strives to keep alive his hope that the original liberating fervour of the Revolution is not extinct and that there may yet be an uprising on his behalf. He bribes his jailer, Henry, to smuggle out a coded letter enlisting support. But Henry is guided by his instinct for self-preservation and his doubts as to whether this is the real Danton or a lookalike decoy set up by the Committee of Public Safety. Griffiths most striking achievement is making the past a metaphor for the present. His Danton represents the plight of the impassioned idealist who finds everything he believes in under attack: both from elitist tyrannies and from what Danton calls "the free dance of capital". If there is a guiding theme, it is of the inextinguishable nature of hope and of the belief that radical change must always operate for the benefit of the many rather than the few.

There is a stunning performance from Stanley Townsend whose Danton combines brawn, brain, sensuality and residual optimism, and a deft one from Kulvinder Ghir whose jailer shows the canny cupidity of the new-model citizen. This is political theatre at its most intelligent and Griffiths's best play in years.

The Trick Is To Keep Breathing
**Lynn Gardner**

WOMAN with red hair and a black dress stands in front of a microphone. Behind her are two women identically attired. The three talk over each other, words entwining. The first woman opens her mouth in an oh-gape of despair and screams.

Welcome inside the mind of Joy Stone, teacher, orphaned daughter, bereaved lover and the heroine of Janice Galloway's remarkable 1990 Scottish novel about cracking up, The Trick Is To Keep Breathing.

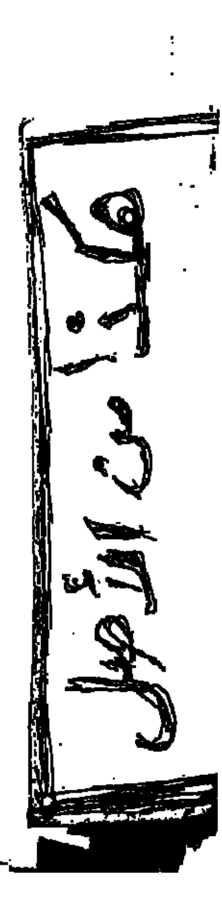
Joy's mother has walked into the sea and her lover has died in a swimming pool accident. Joy carries her grief around like the stone in her name. She gives up food. She is so light that she floats. "Time is not a good healer. I have a good memory," she says.

In Michael Boyd's adaptation, originally produced at Glasgow's Tron theatre and now at London's Royal Court, the pain of Joy's disintegration is physically manifest. Siobhan Redmond, Jennifer Black and Tracy Wilde, who play the different aspects of Joy — public persona, private turmoil, and lost self — writhe and clutch at the air or move like sleepwalkers beneath the sea. The microphone throws feedback at them like a well-aimed punch. Scissors are wielded to score the word ME into canvas, red paint welling like blood from a wound.

Joy admits that she has a problem getting outside of her head. So does the production. When we do escape it comes as light relief. But even the world outside the insistent red ME is savage and grotesque. The health visitor dribbles tea down her chin as she assures Joy that she knows exactly how she feels because her niece once fell off her bicycle and almost died; in a hospital group therapy session the terminally despairing are asked to discuss the plight of unemployed youth.

Boyd's adaptation makes a striking feature of the play's literary origins. Pieces of text are projected on to the stage; random thoughts surfacing from Joy's subconscious. This lends an extra dimension, just as using three actresses to play Joy allows interaction, not just monologue.

This production comes down to slick packaging. Galloway's novel is by no means traditionally structured. Boyd has tweaked the narrative and overlaid the whole with a performance style that owes considerably more to the ICA than the RSC — where Boyd is shortly bound. This is fine, but often you are conscious of a tricksiness, when nothing is needed except recognition that things don't always get worse before they get better. Sometimes they simply get worse.



## Paperbacks

Nicholas Lezard

**The Information, by Martin Amis (Flamingo, £6.99)**

*SO IMPORTANT* that it does not need its name on the front cover. A year on, and I am still not sure whether it is a failure or not. "Certainly the best novel about literary jealousy since Pale Fire," some dork from the Modern Review is quoted as saying, but then most novels on the subject — thankfully, there aren't too many of them — are wretched. Amis has his style to save him, a style other writers would pull their teeth out to achieve, but he seems to have become trapped by his. The Information is a novel composed of individually brilliant sentences that do not quite cohere and achieve the necessary mass and unity for a great novel (it is also strangely, a bugger to read). Fascinating, though, when seen as an allegorised autobiography, and, as such, an exercise in self-loathing.

**Kicking the Pricks, by Derek Jarman (Vintage, £8.99)**

*MEMORIES*, interviews, film stills and rotten poetry by Jarman. All of it, except the poetry, great fun (more consistently fun, even, than his cinematic *oeuvre*), as you would expect from a playful and irreverent mind. Miserably edited, though whether this is out of misplaced reverence for his *nachlass* or just sheer laziness I cannot tell.

**Inside the Mouse: Work and Play at Disney World (Rivers Oram Press, £12.95)**

*THE* result of a project conducted by four academics and writers working under the Duke University umbrella, their mission being to observe and theorise about the Disneyworld *Gestalt*. Read this and find out about "shoppers", plain-clothes *agents provocateurs* employed by Disney to wind up the poor sods dressed in giant Donald Duck costumes enough to step out of character. And much more. The Disney lawyers must hate this book, but there's sod all they can do about it. I hope.

**Benjamin Britten's Poets, ed Boris Ford (Carcanet, £12.95)**

*AN EXCELLENT* idea, brilliantly and meticulously effected: setting down all the lyrics which Britten set to music, printed in the order in which he did so (cuts made by Britten to certain poems are restored). The result is a kind of autobiography, or at least a survey of the poetry that moved the composer. And Britten certainly had an ear for it: whatever you might think of his music (or Peter Pears's voice), this is a superb, eclectic anthology, a commonplace book dedicated to Britten's soul.



# Beware the comfy chair

**Natasha Walter**

Altered States
by Anita Brookner
Jonathan Cape 220pp £14.99

*FOR* some people, the immediate reaction to an Anita Brookner novel is the horrified cry of that old Monty Python sketch: "No, no, not the comfy chair!" There they always are, the comfortable chairs, the stuffy flats, the heavy dinners, the dim light, the lonely Sunday afternoons, the soft rain. In this novel, the narrator encounters the comfy chair during an embattled conversation he is having with the woman he adores. "I sat down heavily in the white chair, which revealed itself to be remarkably comfortable. I leaned my head back; for a moment or two it seemed almost possible that I might take a short nap."

Why does this moment induce a kind of horror in the reader? Here is the narrator, Alan Sherwood, taking part in one of the most important conversations of his life. For the first time, he will exert power over the woman for whom he has an unrequited passion. He will make her give her inheritance, her flat, over to her lonely aunt. We do not know how he persuades her, or why, given that he is much the weaker of the two. Brookner elides that clash of wills. Instead, she tells us, "For a moment or two it seemed almost possible that I might take a short nap."

Such images, in which the body unexpectedly freezes, giving way to sleep or silence or immobility, are endlessly repeated throughout this novel and throughout Brookner's *oeuvre*. Ordinary physical languor becomes pathological through means of constant repetition. On the narrator's "numbing" holidays in France, he says, "I feel incapable of leaving, as if under some sort of sedative". When he lunches with his mother and her fiance, he says, "After the coffee I knew that Aubrey would go upstairs to his own flat and pass out. I always left soon after lunch so as to let Mother have a rest."



People are forever falling ill, and being confined to their beds. Or they are unable to go out because they must look after someone else who is ill. Alan becomes engaged because he gets the flu, and a girl he dislikes looks after him: "That was how she came to stay . . . I felt a weight descend on my shoulders."

Alan's wife, Angela, is the clearest embodiment of this dangerous passivity. When they go on holiday, he finds her day after day, "lying on the sofa in the *salle de séjour*". One day she takes to her bed, stays there for a few months despite all Alan's efforts to revive her, and kills herself with sleeping pills.

The expression of this frightening torpor, in which comfort, inertia and death are constantly melded, is Brookner's great strength. Other people call her books "delicious" or "enjoyable" or "human", but she is closer to writers of ghost stories than realist novels. Her characters all share this petrified quality, as though they are caught in a Munch painting, mouths open in a silent scream.

For this reason her best-known book, the Hotel Du Lac, was her most successful work. Its passive, inert heroine, who misses her own wedding by simply remaining in the car, was utterly convincing as the nexus of this petrified world. In contrast, Altered States is a failure, since the plot hinges on Alan Sherwood's unrequited sexual passion. Because Brookner is tragically unaware of how to create this passion in her language, the plot of the novel and its style diverge, and the book's credibility falls through the gap.

Look at the details, and you can see how misplaced are Brookner's attempts to portray sexual love. Alan's beloved, Sarah, has long red hair, a symbol of sexuality, no doubt, but it has a "waxy smell". Waxy — corpse-like, deathly, not very sexy. At one point the narrator says, "To remember Sarah was to remember something — scarcely someone — inert and dangerous."

What an extraordinary way of describing sexual passion are the words "something inert". In sentences like this, that Brookner betrays her inability to express sensual energies.

Whenever I read articles about the death of the novel, it is always Anita Brookner who springs to mind. She embodies something stale and decadent about contemporary English literature, and yet her novels are admired because of their "literary" quality. What does this consist of? It is a fake literariness, mere use of literary form, a neatly framed plot and a style that bears no relation to the way people think or speak now. She uses this artificial hothouse style not to mark out new territory, but in order to hark back, to insist on the supremacy of the past.

This is the dead end of English literature, a cul-de-sac where mannered gestures stand in for creativity, and a careful aura of literariness replaces literature. Many writers share it; Jeanette Winterson has given up on her former energy to make weak but lyrical gestures at fine ideas; Candia McWilliam hides her thin plots in a clotted, abstract style; John Lanchester's acclaimed new novel was a bloodless pastiche of Nabokov.

Against that frieze of frozen gestures are other, altogether livelier British writers, who are still interrogating both literature and the world around them, still pushing the form of the novel to respond to their experiences and their dreams. But it is tragic that we give so much respect to writers, like Anita Brookner, who really have nothing to offer us except a dusty masquerade.

Beneath this abstract, fake literary style, what is she trying to say? There is a void in her novels, where there should be a heart. At the end of Altered States, Brookner seems to give a kind of apology for her own existence as a writer: "Perhaps there is still room for dull people such as myself, if only to throw into higher relief the exploits of the others, whose lives are more vivid than our own." Maybe there is room, but if English literature is to have a future as well as a past, it is one that we shouldn't linger in.

# Confessions of a reluctant war junkie

**Jonathan Steele**

Love Thy Neighbour: A Story of War
by Peter Maass
Papermac 305pp £10

*THE* protective cladding has gone from the glass-fronted entrance of Sarajevo's Holiday Inn. The lifts work, and even if the upstairs corridor takes you to your room past the bare shell of a neighbouring one with no doors or furniture except an upturned bath and a gaping hole where the window should be, the shooting has stopped. Normality is creeping back and the resident journalists in the Bosnian capital long ago moved to pensions or rented houses.

For more than three years the Holiday Inn was the centre of Bosnia's commuter war, the eye of a hurricane from which camera crews and reporters would race to the latest horror before returning to their satellites and laptop computers to file, edit and unwind.

What made the hotel special was that the oasis became the target. As Peter Maass recounts in his fine book, unwelcome room service could turn up at any moment, with a sniper's bullet or an artillery shell knocking at the door. The hotel's position close to the dividing line made it a tempting aim-point for Serb trigger-men in the suburb of Grbavica just across the river.

He tells one anecdote which takes commuter reporting to its weirdest but real extreme. In an armoured Land Rover he and two colleagues drove to Serb military headquarters for permission to visit Grbavica, and an hour later were with Slobodan, a Serb sniper on the upper floor of an abandoned apartment block, overlooking the Holiday Inn. Maass could see the Reuters satellite dish on the fifth floor, and below it the cracked window of his own room. "If Slobodan would lend me his rifle, I could shoot out my window. I also had a direct line of fire at a room occupied by a journalist with whom I had a ferocious argument the night before. Oh yes, we could have a great time, Slobodan and I."

Peter Maass spent 1992 and 1993 in Bosnia for the Washington Post, when ethnic cleansing was at its height. The atrocities he records have been recounted many times. But what makes his book stand out are his honesty and skill in dissecting the emotions of the press corps.

"Sarajevo was a temptress and it was hard to know which was more seductive, the half-mad look in her eyes or the scarlet drops of blood on her extended hand . . . the more her buildings were destroyed and the more starved her residents looked, the more seductive she was." He pillories the war correspondent equivalent of Wall Street's "big swinging dicks" who go home with the been-there-seen-it-all swagger of victorious generals, but admits "there's a bit of it in most of us".

Maass went to Bosnia, he says, to discover how the descent into darkness could have been so rapid. He divides the world into three. There are manipulators like Karadzic and Milosevic, who take the restraints away, and there is the wild beast which prowls beneath the thin veneer of every society. On the side lines is a group which Maass appears to hold in even greater contempt. They are the appeasers. It is his generic name for diplomats, officials, and government spokesmen.

Maass does not seek to explain the history of the Bosnian war, or record the string of failed international conferences. His focus is the micro-picture, what he saw and heard himself, and particularly what he and his colleagues felt. As an account of the media at war, it rates high. You feel he is often looking into the mirror, not to check his medals, but to see if he is Dorian Grey.

Half way through, he makes an extraordinary confession. Some 100,000 people died in the two years he was in Bosnia, he writes, but he only saw one corpse, an old lady who died of cold in Sarajevo's Old People's Home. He stayed away from morgues, steered clear of battlefields, and when all else failed, averted his eyes. It sounds almost puritanical at first, or even a lie. Yet I believe him, and other readers of this powerful diatribe will do so too.









# Love's chemistry

**Jenny Turner**

Ecstasy: Three Tales of Chemical Romance
by Irvine Welsh
Jonathan Cape 276pp
£14.99 and £9.99 (paperback)

*IRVINE WELSH* is the sort of writer who would make the very worst sort of boyfriend. There are bad bits even in the magnificent Trainspotting: the poorly judged splattershock of Bad Blood, the studenty Junk Dilemmas which pop up like test cards right the way through the book. But the good bits are so brilliant, you want to forgive him everything. Oh darling, don't worry about how you made me suffer through all that sophomoric male-violence-as-colonialism rot in Marabou Stork Nightmares. Just give me it the way you did with the Acid House story about Kylie and the casuals, and you will always be my prince.

Ecstasy, to coin a phrase, is the worst book yet from a writer who has been going from weakness to weakness ever since Trainspotting began its roll in 1993. Composed of three mid-length tales, it has neither the forgiving variety of a short-story collection nor the potential for complexity opened up by the full-length novel form.

The first tale, "Lorraine Goes to Livingston", cuts together a mildly satirical piece of pulp romance writing with an apparently unironic little sitcom about how a couple of nurses wreak revenge upon the corrupted perverts who run the local NHS Trust. Gradually the romance fills up with Sadeian porno-horror and it becomes harder and harder to tell the different levels of textuality apart.

The second tale in particular picks up on Welsh's customary fondness for childishly cruel revenge fantasies and gross images of physical distress. The first few times you come across the turd-in-the-pudding number, or the guy with sliced-off eyelids and his own disconnected penis stuffed into his mouth, it is certainly quite funny and cathartic in a Jake-and-Dinos-Chapman sort of way. But the variously childish revenge dismemberments in Ecstasy are repetitive and depressing.

"Fortune's Always Hiding" — "A Corporate Drug Romance" — is about how a young woman prenatally damaged by a painkiller called "Tenazadrine" hem-hem cannot still her quest for vengeful mayhem until she has kidnapped the infant child of hem-hem "Tenazadrine's" inventor and chainsawed off its arms. This isn't offensive so much as just stupid. Welsh's ostensible misogyny has never bothered me. It's useful to be forewarned that that chap making doggy eyes at you quite possibly longs only to "blow my fucking load and get on out of there, down to the bleeding car". But what use is it to anyone to know that Welsh imagines that people born with short and twisted limbs are born with their brains all twisted too? In the world of contemporary pulp fiction, of course, everything is permitted. But it's never so good to see an awful old stereotype supported as it is to see it deservedly blown apart.

The very worst thing about Ecstasy, however, is all the Ecstasy in it. Or rather, it is the way that all a character has to do is to drop one in a raverie, and hey presto, entire personalities suddenly change for ever more. Whole lifestyles follow immediately. And it only takes one E to make a person fall lastingly in love as well. "She was beautiful. It was Yvonne. Yvonne, Yvonne, Yvonne" (tale 1). "Here I am, staring at this gel. And it ain't just cause she's so pretty, cause she is, she's fucking beautiful . . . " (tale 2). "We're just coming up on an E . . . Then he turns to look at me. His eyes are huge black pools" (tale 3).



Irving Welsh: Ecstasy fixation

The accents vary, but the coups are identically teenybop. Irvine Welsh is 38 this year, according to his own sources. Some people say he's probably a good five years older.

In spite of its occasional wet patch, Trainspotting was at bottom a profoundly disciplined book. Its deep structure dramatises an exacting struggle between the forces of life, as played by Renton's gloriously savage intellectual energy, and the forces of death, in the shape of his on-off addiction to heroin. It is this deeper drama which gives Trainspotting its thrilling surface "vitality".

"I don't want to be a spokesperson for anyone," Irvine Welsh said in 1993. Three years on and he seems happy to lounge around in the "poet laureate of the chemical generation" beanie awarded him by the Face. If the anti-laurels lobby wants yet more evidence that exposure to unconditional adulation turns good intellects soft, then Ecstasy is the book for them. As for whether the damage is irreversible, we'll have to wait and see if Welsh can be bothered to try a little harder with his next.

# Secrets of the mind

**Ian Hamilton**

Robert Frost: A Biography
by Jeffrey Meyers
Constable 353pp £20

*ROBERT FROST* was wary of biography but by no means disdainful of its power to damage even the most sturdily based literary reputation. When, in the 1930s, the life-writers began knocking on his door, be greeted them with hospitable evasions and false leads. He enjoyed the attention but was determined to control it. "I want you to understand me wrong," he used to say. The important thing, in his view, was to "keep the over-curious out of the secret places of my mind."

Frost, after all, had an image to protect. In the eyes of his large readership, he was the lovable New England farmer-bard, tough-minded, independent, genial — and quintessentially American. In 1939, he appointed his own official Boswell, one Lawrance Thompson — a youthful and admiring critic who could, Frost thought, be kept on a tight leash.

For the next 25 years Thompson served as Frost's factotum, accompanying the poet on his travels and assisting, when required, in the continuing ascent of his prestige and celebrity. During the 1930s the leftist literary establishment shunned him as crankily rightwing. By sheer force of talent, though, he had survived and had stuck to his own line, his own hauntingly distinctive "speaking voice". By the end of his long life, Frost had effectively bridged the gap between his popular readership and the highbrow élite. Prizes and honours were heaped on him from all sides and at his death — in 1963, aged 88 — he was without question America's most valued poet.

It was generally assumed that his disciple's biography, when it appeared, would be a hymn of praise. It turned out to be quite the reverse. During his long years of trusted flunkeydom, Thompson had come to despise Frost. The first two volumes of his 2,000-page life portrayed Frost as a mean-minded self-advancer, corrupt in his literary-political manoeuvres, close to madness in his vengefulness and spite. Far from being an amiable rustic, forever communing with the soil, Frost had spent his hours sucking up to powerful critics.

And in his private life he had been just as unpleasantly self-centred. His personal tragedies — the early deaths of four of his six children, one of them by suicide, the slow surrender to insanity of his only sister, the embittered remoteness of the wife he had more or less bullied into marriage; all these were presented by Thompson as the offshoots of Frost's monomaniacal pursuit of literary fame.

In this new life of Frost, Jeffrey Meyers has set himself the task of rescuing Frost's reputation from the worst of Thompson's slanders. He acknowledges the poet's competitive obsessions but does not regard them as all that blameworthy: why shouldn't a fellow try to get ahead in his career? Frost, for all his big talk, never quite believed in his own talent. Meyers shows too that Frost quite often mocked his own morbid need for reassurance, and was altogether more humorously self-aware than Thompson ever quite wanted to concede.

Meyers also deals sympathetically with Frost's handling of his personal relationships. Dreadful things happened in Frost's life, and Thompson tended to portray him as insufficiently dismayed by deaths and disasters which would have wrecked a weaker man, a kinder man. Frost, though, had his reasons for seeming always to be making the best of a bad job. As Meyers demonstrates, Frost's wife Elinor was, for most of their marriage, a round-the-clock despairer. She never recovered, it would seem, from the death of her first child and blamed her husband for not suffering as much as she did.

When Elinor died, Frost wrote to a friend: "I'm afraid I deceived her a little by pretending for the sake of argument that I didn't think the world as bad a place as she did." Elinor, he went on, wanted to "bring me down in sorrow", but "she needn't have. I know I never had a leg to stand on, and I should think I had said so in print."

Frost, of course, did say so in print, repeatedly, and Meyers is good at connecting the poems to the life. His major coup, though, comes in his treatment of the last two decades of Frost's life, the decades in which Thompson was at his side. Elinor Frost died in 1938. Not long afterwards, Frost began an affair with Kay Morrison, a married woman in her late thirties. Frost, according to Meyers, was frantically in love and wanted Morrison to marry him, but she refused to leave her husband. Indeed, she wanted the affair to be kept secret. For Frost, this relationship was central to his life for many years, and — we now see — it gets into several of his poems. But there is no mention of it in the Thompson life. In this, Morrison appears as Frost's secretary, helpmate and literary admirer.

*THOMPSON*, in fact, died in 1973 and did not complete the third volume of his trilogy, so we cannot be certain how he would have treated the affair. Meyers, who has had access to the biographer's notebooks, is convinced that he would have agreed to its suppression. Neither Kay Morrison nor her husband wanted the truth to be known. Frost did, though, and urged Thompson to tell all.

Meyers believes that Thompson had deep reasons for not telling. He, too, it now transpires, had an affair with Morrison. Indeed, she was in love with him, and not with Frost. A biographer's quandary indeed.

Jeffrey Meyers, in his numerous biographies, has become expert at locating the lover-we-never-knew-about, but in this instance he has excelled himself. The Frost/Morrison disclosures enable us to read Frost's late poems with a new intelligence and sympathy. Had Thompson lived long enough to forget the love-dramas of Frost's final years, would he have toned down his first two volumes? If Jeffrey Meyers ever finds himself pushed for a new subject, he could do worse than zone in on Lawrance Thompson.



# Sounds from the edge of the world

**Richard Williams**

Waiting for the Sun
by Barney Hoskyns
Viking 356pp £20

*IT'S HARD* to visit Los Angeles without wanting to make sense of it. The place presents us with a vision of our future, perhaps of our apocalypse, served up with a location and a cast — and a climate — irresistible to a writer. Each of the classic studies has viewed it through the lens of a particular obsession: Nathanael West (The Day Of The Locust) and Gavin Lambert (The Slide Area) through the internal life of the movie business, Mike Davies (City Of Quartz) through its complex demographics. Barney Hoskyns, equally plausibly, examines the city through its post-war music scene.

It is not necessary to approve of the Eagles or their songs to recognise that nothing so accurately expresses the tainted beauty, the poisoned sweetness, the cheap potency of the city. If the best place to hear Gabrieli's antiphony is in St Mark's, for which it was designed, then the aching voices of these spoiled choirboys and the curling sting of a steel guitar belong on a car radio in the neon glow of Mulholland Drive at twilight, facing west, looking down from the ridge with the lights twinkling and the sun setting over the ocean dead ahead. And that, too, is what it brings to mind for millions who have never even been there.

Hoskyns, whose earlier books include a fine study of soul singing called Say It One More Time For The Brokenhearted, begins and ends the story with black music, opening with the bebop and rhythm and blues of Central Avenue in the 1940s and closing with the gangsta rap of Compton and South Central LA in the present decade. Yet the prevailing image of the music of Southern California is of a white man's paradise of bungalows and palm trees in and around the Hollywood hills, an ambiance that links Eddie Cochran's Summertime Blues to the Beach Boys' I Get Around, the Byrds, Johnny Rivers, the Mamas and the Papas, Jackson Browne, the Eagles and the Go Gos.

But California music is also the disquieting fantasy world of Jim Morrison and the Doors, the uneasy affluence of Joni Mitchell, the dyspeptic laments of Tom Waits and the violence of the punk groups X and Black Flag. What the author turns out to be searching for is the fault line, the crack in the dream which opens to reveal the darkness.

At one level Waiting For The Sun could be read as a companion volume to Kenneth Anger's Hollywood Babylon, although Hoskyns's intentions are more complex and serious. He succeeds in his objective of telling the same story from a different perspective, balancing his foreground interests with an awareness of the social history of the place.

His sensitivity to a broad spectrum of music helps him illuminate a story unusually rich in circumstantial detail and business background. Lesser known figures like the bandleader Johnny Otis, who was born white but lived black, are properly brought into the spotlight.

Photographs of the principal characters and of the significant locations — Canter's deli, the Capitol building, the Chateau Marmont, the Roxy — are neatly dropped into the narrative of a book which, one way and another, has a lot to say about the city at the edge of the world.

## Chess Leonard Barden

**GARRY KASPAROV, who just a few months ago seemed at the height of his powers and set to continue his 12-year reign at the top of world chess, is suddenly looking hunted. The 33-year-old champion is pursued by rivals a decade younger, who increasingly sense that he is no longer in a class apart.**

**It wasn't just that Kasparov could finish only third at Seville, behind Kramnik, aged 20, and Topalov, 21. The fact is, the result flattered him. If Gata Kamsky, 22, beats Anatoly Karpov in their current match for the Fide world title in Kalmykia, the pressures on Kasparov, holder of the breakaway PCA crown, will increase further.**

**However, while he still has good personal results against Kamsky, Kramnik is a different matter. Their lifetime score in decisive games is 5-5, 3-3 in rapid chess and 2-2 in slower classical play. Such an outcome is already a psychological plus for the less experienced younger man, who scored this impressive victory with the black pieces at Seville.**

**Kasparov-Kramnik, Queen's Gambit Meran Variation**

**1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 Nf3 e6 5 e3 Nbd7 6 Bd3 dxc4 7Bxc4 b5 8 Bd3 Bb7 9 0-0 a6 10 e4 c5 11 d5 c4 12 Bc2 Qc7 13 Nd4?!**

So far this is a known book line, but here theory diverges by 14 dxe6 fxe6 and now either 14 Ng5 Nc5 15 e5 or 14 Nd4 Nc5 15 Be3 0-0-0 16 Qe2 e5 17 Nf3 (Lautier-Gelfand, Amsterdam 1996).

Kasparov's plan of a delayed pawn exchange at e6 allows Kramnik to develop pieces rapidly while the white QN is driven to the edge at a4.

**Nc5 14 b4 cxb3 ep 15 axb3 b4 16 Na4 Ncxe4 17 Bxe4 Nxe4 18 dxe6 Bd6!** Excellent play. Black acquires the famous Horwitz formation where the bishops line up on adjacent diagonals on an open board against an insufficiently guarded enemy king.

**19 exf7+ Qxf7 20 f3 Qh5 21 g3 0-0!!** Black now detonates a series of explosive sacrifices that wreck the WK's defences.

**22 fxe4 Qh3! 23 Nf3 Bxg3! 24 Nc5** The bishop is immune because of 24 hxg3 Qxg3+ 25 Kh1 Bxe4 and B or Rxf3.

**Rxf3 25 Rxf3?** 25 Ra2! is a sterner defence.

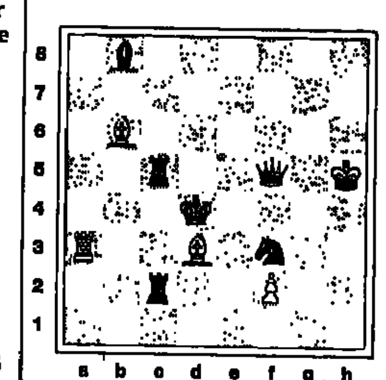
**Qxh2+ 26 Kf1 Bc6 27 Bg5?** And here, 27 Ra5 is a better try.

**Bb5+ 28 Nd3 Re8 29 Ra2 Qh1+??** A blemish in Kramnik's imaginative attack.

Instead 29 . . . Bxd3+ 30 Qxd3 Qh1+ 31 Ke2 Qe1 mates or 30 Rxd3 Qh1+ 31 Ke2 Qg2+ 32 Ke3 Rxe4 mates.

**30 Ke2 Rxe4+ 31 Kd2 Qg2+ 32 Kc1 Qxa2 33 Rxg3 Qa1+ 34 Kc2 Qc3+ 35 Kb1 Rd4 36 Resigns.** If 37 Bf6 Rxd3! wins at least a piece.

**No 2427**



**White mates in two moves, against any defence (by R Brogi, 1921). This took me 10 minutes; see if you can do better. Before you phone or write to say that 1 Qe4 is mate in one, look again.**

**No 2426: 1 c8Q+? Ka7 fails, so 1 Bc5! bxc5 2 b6 c4 3 c8Q mate, or 1 . . . Ka7 2 Bxb6+ Kxb6 3 c8N mate.**

# A simple view of the high life

**Mark Cocker**

*PERHAPS* the very first thing to be impressed about when meeting the mountain inhabitants of Nepal is their astonishing fitness. Although our Himalayan trek often left us physically exhausted, we never tired of extolling the stamina of the team of porters accompanying us.

By the end of a fortnight's walk, the most repeated tales had acquired the status of myths: such as the day one of our team went down 4,000 feet to a local village — a climb almost equivalent to Britain's highest mountain — and returned just to ensure we had chicken for dinner.

My other favourite was the story of our porter, Suman, a Nepali from the Everest region and barely more than five feet tall, who, during a previous trek, was obliged to carry an 82-year-old Austrian on his back when the old man's legs gave out.

Another Nepalese characteristic that every visitor mentions is their almost universal and irrepressible cheerfulness. Observing the local people through whose villages we passed, I sensed that much of this emanated from their pastoral lifestyle and I was filled with deep nostalgia. Equally impressive were the aesthetic riches of their Buddhist culture — the prayer flags fluttering over each house, the long walls of inscribed prayer stones, the ubiquitous shrines and temples, and the atmosphere of invincible calmness that seemed to permeate their daily agricultural routines.

At the same time, I was aware that in extolling the simple life I was guilty of over-simplification. For behind the rustic poetry of their lifestyle is a desperate poverty. Even our porters' meagre daily wages of $3.75 is a substantial and tempting salary to the local people. It is the economic issue that eventually brought me back to my own responsibilities as a tourist in this mountain paradise.

Amongst the world's 10 poorest countries, Nepal has few natural resources to exploit. It is ironic that the two most famous exports of this peaceable, rural nation are Gurkha soldiers and the millions of tons of topsoil, washed down from deforested slopes during the monsoon.

However, with many of the world's greatest mountains and a people internationally renowned for their culture and hospitality, Nepal has the basis for a tourist industry that is now constantly expanding. During our visit to the Langtang Valley, in the country's largest national park and close to the border with Tibet, we saw a graphic expression of this economic development. While returning along the forest trails we were forced to make way for a long line of porters carrying huge, cumbersome planks that were going into the construction of new tourist lodges.

As the inhabitants of this remote region attempt to satisfy foreign trekkers' appetites for accommodation, food and other amenities (such as hot showers), they may be forced to make additional demands on their traditional fuel source — timber. Yet, in exploiting the Langtang's spectacular forests, amongst the most diverse in Nepal, they will then begin to destroy the very environment that many visitors come to see.

Equally, in disrupting the local economy and undermining the traditional values of these mountain people, the foreigners themselves are threatening the culture whose colour and integrity they so admire.

It is a perplexing problem for which one instinctively assumes there must be an answer. However, the best I could manage as I stood marvelling at the magnificent diminutive Suman while he soldiered up the trail with a 35kg load, including my luggage, was a good measure of guilt with my sense of wonder.

ILLUSTRATION: ANN HOBGA

## Quick crossword no. 320

**Across**

1 Activities in which animals are killed (5,6)
9 Virtuous (9)
10 Snow runner (3)
11 Elegance (5)
13 Put in place (7)
14 Snuggle (6)
15 Compulsion (6)
18 Handbill (7)
20 Additional (5)
21 Tavern (3)
22 Lowest female singing voice (9)
24 Fraternity (11)

**Down**

2 Fall behind — convict (3)
3 Porridge ingredient (7)
4 Unemotional (6)
5 Desert fertile spot — pop group (5)
6 Will (9)
7 Man's innate offence (8,3)
8 Frivolous news period (5,6)
12 Teetotaller (9)
16 Dig up (7)
17 Attitude — at golf? (6)
19 Lawful (5)
23 Zodiac sign (6)

**Last week's solution**

## Bridge Zia Mahmood

*I WAS FURIOUS* with myself. I had just broken one of my cardinal rules and paid a heavy price. The occasion? The unique Cavendish Calcutta, an auction tournament in which pairs are "sold" like cattle to the highest bidder. Hard-nosed buyers weigh the odds on each pair before contributing to a purse of more than $800,000. It is the only "real money" tournament in bridge.

The rule? Not vulnerable against vulnerable opponents, I had passed my partner's opening bid with a bad hand. The opponents had sailed into a game they would never have reached if I had responded. Never again, I vowed as I moved table, scarcely expecting that the very first hand against new opponents would put me to the same test. I picked up another terrible hand:

♠84 ♥J73 ♦1042 ♣Q10543

Partner, not vulnerable against vulnerable, opened one diamond, and right-hand opponent passed. It looked sick to bid, but the sting of my last disaster still smarted. I bid 1NT, hoping that partner would not take it too seriously. He raised to 3NT — ouch! — but the dreaded double never came and I contemplated this dummy on the lead of the two of spades:

| South | North |
|---|---|
| ♠ 84 | ♠ 975 |
| ♥ J73 | ♥ AK108 |
| ♦ 1042 | ♦ AKJ7 |
| ♣ Q10543 | ♣ A2 |

The opponents cashed the first four tricks in spades, ending in the West hand. It was a good thing the spades were 4-4, but it would need more than a miracle to make eight tricks from the red suits with no entries to my hand. Still, while there's life, there's hope, so I threw a club from the dummy. West now surprised me by switching to a diamond. That was odd — why not a club to dummy's now singleton ace? He certainly would not be leading away from the queen of diamonds, so I rose with the ace and cashed the king.

East dropped the queen of diamonds! I cashed the ace of hearts, on which East dropped the nine, and I crossed to my hand with the ten of diamonds.

I led the jack of hearts, on which West, naturally, played low — and it was time to think. With the fall of the queen of diamonds, I had four diamond tricks, so I needed "only" four heart tricks for my splendid contract to come home. If East had ♥Q9, I should play the king on this trick, but if he started with ♥9x or ♥9xx I could not allow his play of the nine to deflect me from the finesse.

One of the tips in my book Bridge My Way is, drop the nine in defence whenever possible. I asked East if he had read it. He smiled like the Sphinx, but said nothing. The percentage play was obviously to run the jack of hearts — it is routine at this level of play to drop the nine from such holdings as 9x or 9xx — but was this a "routine" situation? East had just seen his queen of diamonds felled offside. He would be suffering disappointment and frustration about that. At such times it is very difficult for even the finest of players to recover maximum mental efficiency in time to play a false card to the very next trick.

Reflecting that, at least if I were wrong, I could congratulate East on a great play, I called for the king of hearts from dummy. East, for the second time, dropped the doubleton queen! That's another reason to respond to opening bids on three counts. As well as keeping the opponents out of their laydown games, it enables you to reach your own.





**Football** European Championship quarter-finals: Germany 2 Croatia 1.

# Sammer tonic for Germany

**Martin Thorpe at Old Trafford**

GERMANY booked a place in another semi-final with England, a cue for time-travel back to 1966. The tactical discipline that has characterised Germany's domination of international tournaments over the years saw them through a niggly, bad-tempered game against a Croatia side who, though reduced to 10 men after 57 minutes when Igor Stimac was sent off, created enough chances to have won the game.

This is not a great German side, and the fact that Croatia carved out so many opportunities against a defence that was not breached in the three group games will hearten the England camp.

Even more encouraging for them is the news that Jürgen Klinsmann will miss the Wembley passion play with a torn muscle in his right calf. With Fredi Bobic taken to hospital with a dislocated shoulder, Germany are running out of strikers.

Then again, maybe they do not need any. Both German goals stemmed from Matthias Sammer, nominally a sweeper but perhaps only because he regularly sweeps into the opposing penalty area, a former midfield player at home on the ball and in front of goal.

Germany's classy red-headed *libero* is a disrupting influence for opponents unsure how to pick up his stylish strolls downfield. He certainly pulled his team out of the fire. Croatia, who were missing Prosinecki with a leg injury, should have scored more than their one goal but their finishing was as indisciplined as their behaviour.

Stimac was sent off for a foul on Scholl after 57 minutes, an untimely second bookable offence given that his side had just got back into the game via Suker's equaliser. A mere minute after the dismissal Germany scored their winner.

Perhaps Croatia should already have been down to 10 men. Two minutes before half-time Slaven Bilic blatantly kicked the prone Ziege while he lay on the ground after an accidental clash with Bobic that caused the dislocated shoulder.

It was an unnecessary blight on a Croatian performance that promised much. As early as the 15th minute Vlaovic should have scored from seven yards but shot wide. It proved a costly miss, for six minutes later Germany scored. A 20-yard chip from Scholl released Sammer into the area and as he headed the ball round Jerkan, the Croat blocked it with his left arm. Klinsmann dispatched the penalty.

Croatia had their own penalty appeal turned down when Suker ran into Helmer but they equalised six minutes after the break. Not for the first time the German defence looked wobbly when pressured on the ball — Shearer please note. Sammer, hassled by Jurcevic, thought he had found some relief by playing the ball back to Freund. But Jurcevic dispossessed Freund, the ball fell to Suker and he skipped neatly round Köpke to become the first man in Euro 96 to beat the German goalkeeper.

Six minutes later, Croatia were down to 10 men, and they promptly conceded the German winner. Babbel escaped down the right and slotted in a cross to Sammer eight yards out. The sweeper's header was half-blocked by Bilic but the rebound fell kindly to Sammer, who swept the ball past Ladic.

As often occurs, the 10 men fought back. Twice in four minutes Suker, perfectly positioned on the back post, was found unmarked by deep crosses from the left, but twice the hero of the victory over Denmark headed disappointingly straight at Köpke.

France 0 Holland 0 (after extra-time, France won 5-4 on penalties)

# French show Dutch the value of team spirit

**Martin Thorpe at Anfield**

**AS the French players piled one on top of the other at Anfield to celebrate a place in the semi-finals, the Dutch camp could only console themselves with the thought that this cruel exit might be the making of their troubled young team.**

**Penalties are an unsatisfactory way to decide anything significant, but from that instant heroes-and-villains device came a result on Saturday which shows that life can be much harder when team spirit and tactical organisation are so badly disrupted.**

**Unlike the Dutch, the French got it right. Prior to Euro 96 their defender Marcel Desailly said of the coach Aimé Jacquet's influence: "Before, we were a collection of highly talented individuals. Now we are a collective unit, each player knowing his responsibilities."**

**This was the main reason that the Cantona and Ginola free spirits were controversially omitted from the squad, though the mouth-watering thought of *Mon Génius* playing in this team has been given added spice now that a knee injury has ended the striker Dugarry's Euro 96.**

**But Jacquet dislikes "players of mood" and events have supported his judgment. France may have sparkled only in patches but their work-rate and communal understanding built on a solid defence have justified predictions that they would be one of the teams to watch.**

**What a contrast with Holland, supposedly the European kings of organised football. Instead they have a young squad prey to political intrigue, a traditionally reliable team pattern disrupted by the injury of a key creative launch-pad in Frank de Boer, with his inventive side-kick Danny Blind suspended for the first game.**

**Holland's tone was set from that early draw with Scotland but it was the putative villain of Saturday's defeat who most vividly highlighted the contrast with France. Clarence Seedorf is a player of mood, the barrack-room lawyer at the centre of those in-camp rows over favouritism and worse, and his game has suffered.**

**Taken off in the first half against Switzerland to save him from being sent off, Seedorf did not start on Saturday despite threats from his father-cum-agent that, if that ever happened, his boy would be on the first plane home.**

**Then, having eventually landed as a substitute for the injured Bergkamp, he saw an 83rd-minute cross handled by Desailly in the area only for the referee to give a free-kick on the edge. Then, two minutes from the trials of Golden Goal extra-time, Mulder sent him clear on goal inside the area but, instead of chipping the advancing Lama, he hit the ball against the goalkeeper's legs.**

**Worse, taking his turn in the shoot-out at 3-3, he was obliged by the referee to reposition the ball on the spot and then hit his shot too close to Lama. It left Holland in despair and Seedorf in tears.**

Czech Republic 1 Portugal 0

# Shapely Czechs ride luck

THE spirit, if not the quality, of the Czechs' triumph in the 1976 European Championship took the Republic into the semi-finals of the 1996 tournament when an excellent piece of improvisation by Karel Poborsky ended Portugal's attempt to bewitch Euro 96 with passing skills, *writes David Lacey at Villa Park.*

Having already been largely responsible for the elimination of Italy, the Czechs now meet France at Old Trafford. The good news for the French is that the opposition will be without four regular players — Suchoparek, Latal, Bejbl and Kuka — all of whom are suspended after receiving second yellow cards. Latal, in fact, was sent off nine minutes from the end for a second bookable offence.

At least the concerted efforts of the Portuguese to exploit the advantage of an extra man provided a smattering of belated excitement to a match which had been becalmed for long periods. Mutual caution was the principal culprit, although the fussy refereeing of Hellmut Krug, who flourished nine yellow cards and a red, did little to improve the flow.

The Czechs deserved their win because they kept both their shape and their wits despite Portugal's abundance of possession. This Czech team displays little of the verve of the side of 20 years ago but they are the tournament's opportunists.

**Sports Diary** Shiv Sharma

# Scattering of seeds

LOSING is the great American sin, and on the opening day of Wimbledon Michael Chang, seeded No 6, and Jim Courier, seeded No 8, sinned most horribly. But the greatest sinner by far was Andre Agassi.

The No 3 seed, and on his day the most brilliant tennis player in the world, lost abjectly by 2-6, 7-6, 6-4, 7-6 to Doug Flach, a 25-year-old American ranked 281st in the world.

Agassi, who was bundled early out of the French Open, claimed his fitness and mental state were back to normal. Clearly he was kidding himself. Usually one of the quickest movers around the court, he was notably sluggish.

Chang has never managed to get beyond the quarter-finals in this tournament but few expected him to lose to the Spaniard Alberto Costa. As for Courier, he lost to fellow American Jonathan Stark.

Wimbledon was also missing Thomas Muster, the world No 2 who withdrew through injury after being seeded seventh. He called his Wimbledon seeding "a joke".

The seeding for men's singles is: 1 P Sampras, 2 B Becker, 3 A Agassi, 4 G Ivanisevic, 5 Y Kafelnikov, 6 M Chang, 7 T Muster (withdrawn), 8 J Courier, 9 T Enqvist, 10 M Stich, 11 W Ferreira, 12 S Edberg, 13 T Martin, 14 M Rosset, 15 A Boetsch, 16 C Pioline, 17 R Krajicek. Women's singles: 1 S Graf, 2 M Seles, 3 C Martinez, 4 A Sanchez Vicario, 5 A Huber, 6 J Novotna, 7 C Rubin, 8 L Davenport, 9 M J Fernandez, 10 M Maleeva, 11 B Schultz-McCarthy, 12 K Date, 13 M Pierce, 14 A Coetzer, 15 I Spirlea, 16 M Hingis.

Bird: emotional last Test

IT WAS a tearful time for two of Yorkshire's cricketing greats. Umpire Dickie Bird was a bundle of emotions as he took the field to officiate in his record 66th and last Test match at Lord's while, at the Inner Temple, Ray Illingworth was regretting taking up the job of the chairman of selectors.

For Dickie Bird, it was a standing ovation from the crowd and the players of both England and India, who formed a guard of honour as he came out, back slightly bent, for his Test finale. The moment made him reach for his handkerchief. But he had a busy start, giving England captain Mike Atherton out lbw in the first over.

Illingworth was found guilty by the Test and County Cricket Board's disciplinary committee of bringing the game into disrepute, and fined £2,000. The charge relates to comments he made in his book about Devon Malcolm following a row between the two during England's tour of South Africa last year. Extracts from his book were published in a newspaper in Britain. He was also reprimanded for breach of confidence for not submitting a draft of the book to the board for approval.

Illingworth has become so disenchanted by the machinations of English cricket that he wishes he had never taken the job. Close to tears, he said: "If I had the choice again and I could go back three years, I would never take the job."

ATHLETICS' oldest world record fell to Michael Johnson when he won the men's 200 metres in 19.66 seconds at the US Olympic trials in Atlanta on Sunday, taking 0.06 seconds off the mark set by Pietro Mennea in Mexico City in 1979.

WOMEN amateur golfers from Britain and Ireland retained the Curtis Cup against the United States at Killarney. They went 8-4 up in the morning foursome on Saturday and needed just one point from the six concluding singles. They did not have to wait long as Elaine Ratcliffe stormed five clear of Sara Leburn, and Allison Rose put the icing on a fabulous display by going six up on Ellen Port.

THE All Blacks gave Scotland a lesson in scrummaging power as they won the second Test 36-12 at a rain-sodden Eden Park in Auckland. Four of the New Zealand tries resulted directly from scrums, helping them to win the series 2-0. Meanwhile, the woes of Wales continue. They were ripped to shreds in an unrelenting second half onslaught by Australia, who went on to win 42-3 in Sydney.

RENAULT are to quit grand prix racing at the end of next season. The decision may precipitate an engine-supply crisis as Williams and Benetton look for replacements. The two teams have dominated Formula One since 1992. Renault gave no explanation except to say: "The goal the company set itself has been largely surpassed." The decision came only four days after Damon Hill scored the 49th victory of the Williams-Renault partnership in the Canadian Grand Prix.

FORMER Australian fast bowler, Ray Lindwall, has died, following a stroke, aged 74. He claimed 228 Test wickets in 61 matches and along with fellow bowler Keith Miller formed a winning partnership which dominated the Australian bowling line-up in the period after the second world war.

**Euro 96** England 0 Spain 0 (after extra time, England won 4-2 on penalties)

# Seaman's handiwork sinks Armada

**David Lacey at Wembley**

AT LAST the 1966 show. The further England progressed in the European Championship the more likely it became that Germany would lie across their path in the semi-finals. So it has proved.

Since winning the World Cup on that sunny, showery Wembley afternoon England have beaten the Germans only twice in 11 meetings, 2-0 in a friendly in 1975 and 3-0 in a mini-tournament in Mexico City 10 years later, when Franz Beckenbauer's jet-lagged players were merely fulfilling their contractual obligations. Either way, Wednesday's encounter should be different.

For England bad memories of Turin six years ago still rankle. Again they have reached the semi-finals of a major tournament on penalties — those scored by Gary Lineker against Cameroon in Italia 90 and the one saved by David Seaman to beat Spain on Saturday.

If Terry Venables's players combine the attacking flair they showed against Holland with the defensive resilience that frustrated Spain, he may well join Sir Alf Ramsey as only the second man to take England to a major final.

Having survived extra-time against a technically superior but chronically impotent Spanish side, England won a tense though largely unexceptional quarter-final 4-2 on penalties.

Whether they like it or not this England team will for ever be associated with bars — Hong Kong bars, Snickers bars and the crossbar struck by Hierro with Spain's opening kick of the shoot-out.



Super saver . . . Seaman foils Nadal's penalty attempt to give England victory PHOTOGRAPH: KEVIN LAMARQUE

In that instant Wembley knew its concerted booing of all things Hispanic had reduced the Spanish cause to a Quixotic gesture. Puerile though the noises off were, England would have suffered a sinfonia of whistles given a similar situation in Seville.

When Pearce placed his kick beyond Zubizarreta, instead of hitting the goalkeeper's legs as he had done in the 1990 World Cup semi-final shoot-out with the Germans, the old Forester must have felt the relief of losing a grumbling appendix. Yet the final heroic moment belonged, inevitably, to Seaman, whose save from Nadal spared Fowler the angst of a further penalty. England's debt to their able Seaman grows and grows. At this rate he must surely end the tournament a rear-admiral.

Whatever the manner of its achievement, England's victory has guaranteed Venables a place on the national team's modest roll of honour. Reaching the last four of a major tournament is roughly what is required of a host nation. Anything else is a bonus. England have surely gone beyond the point of failure.

Saturday's performance had little of the sheer exuberance of the 4-1 victory over the Dutch in mid-week. Spain's superior organisation was responsible for that.

The broad avenues of space so eagerly exploited against Holland had become culs-de-sac. England spent much of the game in pursuit of the ball; no wonder so many legs gave out after 90 minutes.

Call it resilience, guts or sheer bloodymindedness, there was another sort of glory on Saturday. Much of it concerned the marvellous performances in defence of Adams and Southgate, with Pearce not far behind.

Deprived, through suspension, of Ince's protection in midfield, and given added responsibility when Gary Neville was pushed forward after half-time to curb the advances of Sergi, this trio refused to be cowed by the obvious superiority on the ball of Amor, Hierro, Caminero, Sergi, Salinas and Alfonso.

Yet in one instance England did ride their luck. The replay showed that the goal Salinas scored in the 33rd minute, after a miscue by Hierro had thrown the England defence, should not have been disallowed for offside.

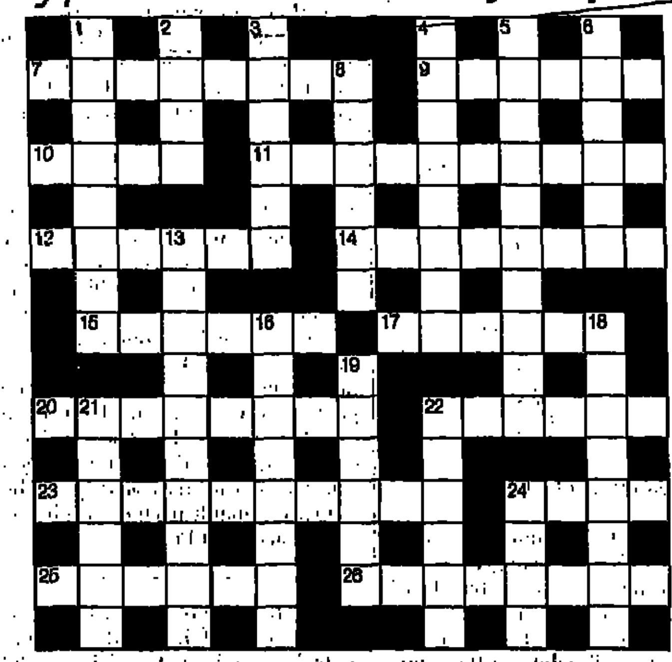
By playing Nadal in a back three and withdrawing Manjarin and Kiko behind Salinas, Javier Clemente left himself with too narrow an attacking front. Sergi gave Spain width in the first half but, once Neville moved forward to meet him, this threat faded. For Neville, however, the victory was pyrrhic. Eager to obey Venables's orders, the right-back caught Sergi from behind two minutes into the second half and a second yellow card meant he missed the semi-final.

On chances created, if not the overall standard of their passing and movement, England deserved to progress. For all their skill, Spain did not draw from Seaman the saves Zubizarreta had to make from Shearer, in the third minute, Adams on the half-hour and Gascoigne early in extra-time, the nearest either side came to winning through sudden death.

England's 4-1 victory over Holland in their final Group A match is widely being acclaimed as their most famous victory since the 1966 World Cup final. Two goals apiece from Shearer, including a penalty, and Sheringham enabled England to sweep past the 1988 European champions on their way to the quarter-final meeting with Spain.

Scotland were eliminated from the tournament by the virtue of scoring one goal less than Holland. Their 1-0 victory over Switzerland was not enough, and they finished in third place.

## Cryptic crossword by Crispa



**Across**

7 Out-of-reach item when there's very little money (8)
9 Window fitting that's dear, having wood in it (6)
10 The guy receiving nothing will make complaint (4)
11 Has in mind to mend tears in net (10)
12 Sort of dog for the scholarly lot? (6)
14 A military leader in charge, efficient yet courteous (8)
15 No longer insolent, being clever (6)
17 The maggot is anything but aggressive (6)
20 Where the French supporter backed staff (8)
22 Housing fit only for pigs went first as arranged (6)
23 Businessman getting cold riding farm machinery (10)
24 The boot should hold a fair amount (4)
25 About a hundred take on fuel and start back (6)
26 Green in the main? (3-5)

**Down**

1 Lawyers, over a period, created peers (8)
2 The contents of most, unfortunately, are shocking (4)
3 Order, given unlimited credit (6)
4 Value a quiet compliment (8)
5 Country people carrying cash? That's a joke! (10)
6 12's cosy accommodation (6)
8 With Access a most desirable rich cake may be obtained (6)
13 Break apart, one is working (10)
16 Gather around helper returning from the centre (8)
18 Training royalty in duty (8)
19 Not charged for rags — it would appear wrong (6)
21 A party the leftist liked very much (6)
22 Call out second best (6)
24 The kind alternative in a way (4)

**Last week's solution**

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| M | U | Z | Z | L | E | | S | U | P | E | R | B | L | Y |
| A | | A | | E | | | | N | | L | | Y | | A |
| J | U | N | T | A | | F | I | D | D | L | E | B | O | W |
| O | | Z | | S | | U | | E | | I | | L | | N |
| R | O | I | S | T | E | R | E | R | | N | O | O | N | E |
| I | | B | | | | N | | C | | G | | W | | D |
| T | R | A | N | Q | U | I | L | L | I | T | Y | | | |
| Y | | R | | U | | S | | O | | O | | V | | A |
| | | W | I | T | H | S | T | A | N | D | I | N | G |
| G | | I | | T | | E | | H | | | | V | | U |
| O | U | N | C | E | | D | R | I | N | K | W | I | N | E |
| T | | S | | W | | F | | N | | A | | S | | C |
| H | O | U | S | E | F | L | A | G | | P | I | E | T | A |
| I | | L | | L | | A | | | | P | | O | | K |
| C | H | A | P | L | E | T | S | | X | A | N | T | H | E |

**Cricket** Second Test: England v India

# Debutants enjoy the ball

**Mike Selvey at Lord's**

INDIAN cricket, on the rack at Edgbaston, rediscovered itself at Lord's. Although the match ended in a draw, there were wickets in England's first innings for Venkatesh Prasad, who with Javagal Srinath already forms one of the most potent opening attacks in the world.

Then, when they batted, neither the genius Tendulkar nor the sorcerer Azharuddin scored the runs but two novices in their first Tests. On Saturday, Saurav Ganguly, a rare Bengali Test cricketer, made a century in more than seven hours of concentration in only the third hundred on this ground by a man playing his maiden Test innings.

No Test match has seen two debutants from the same team score centuries. India came within a whisker as Rahul Dravid, who had kept Ganguly company during a sixth-wicket stand of 94, carried on where his partner had left off, making 95 before he was ninth out.

Dravid's contribution carried India to 429, a first innings lead of 85 and a position from which they could make life awkward for England. In the end, Mike Atherton declared England's second innings closed at 278 for nine, with not even the remotest chance of a result.

There was, of course, emotion. Dickie Bird's final session as international umpire had been greeted with yet another standing ovation from a small crowd, and he had his obligatory blub using what will surely soon be marketed as the Dickie Bird Superhanky.

Two hours later, he gave his index finger one final airing as he sent Jack Russell back to the pavilion before, at 5.20 and fidgeting still, he heaved a sigh, shook hands all round with the Indian team, removed the balls and was given a police escort from the field.

This had promised to be a quiet last day at the office. However, with lunch still a quarter of an hour away and the lead just 83 the fourth wicket of the day had fallen and Russell, the hero of the first innings with a gutsy 124, found himself trudging out to join Ronnie Irani.

Fortunately, after his five-hour blockathon with Atherton in Johannesburg this situation was right up Russell's road. Everything that India's bowlers could propel at him, including a second new ball, was repelled during the afternoon and although he lost Irani shortly before tea for 41, the game was by then safe. Although there was competition from Ganguly's composed century, there was little doubt that it was Russell who was the Man of the Match.

**England** 344 (Russell 124, Thorpe 89, Prasad 5 for 76), and 278 for 9 dec (Stewart 66); **India** 429 (Ganguly 131, Dravid 95).
**Match drawn**

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